

PC POWER

EUROPE'S BEST PC LEISURE GUIDE

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STEAMY WINDOWS

Test Windows '95
on page 30!

**DOUBLE
CD EDITION!**
OVER A GIGABYTE
OF SOFTWARE!

DEMOS

PLEASE ASK
FOR GIFT
AT COUNTER

MICROSOFT TOWER OF BABEL
11TH HOUR
DUNGEON MASTER 2 ZORRO
PINBALL DREAMS DELUXE
PINBALL FANTASIES DELUXE
BRAINDEAD 13 FRAMED
BATTLE ISLE 2 KINGDOM
DORLING KINDERSLEY SAMPLER
PAINTSHOP PRO/3
and more!

ARE YOUR COVERDISKS
MISSING? ASK YOUR
NEWSAGENT FOR
THEM NOW!

**16 printers
tested this
issue!**

**LIVE FROM
LOS ANGELES**
DESCENT 2
BLADE RUNNER
WING COMMANDER IV



9 771352 789011

07

Alex Dampier

PRO

HOCKEY

95

ALEX DAMPIER
Great Britain Ice
Hockey Coach



I am confident that playing this sports simulation will be both challenging and stimulating and I personally hope that it might encourage you to try live Ice Hockey as a sport.

See you on the Ice!

Alex Dampier

Alex Dampier

PRESS QUOTES:

"A stunning ice hockey game...outstanding gameplay"
PC Format

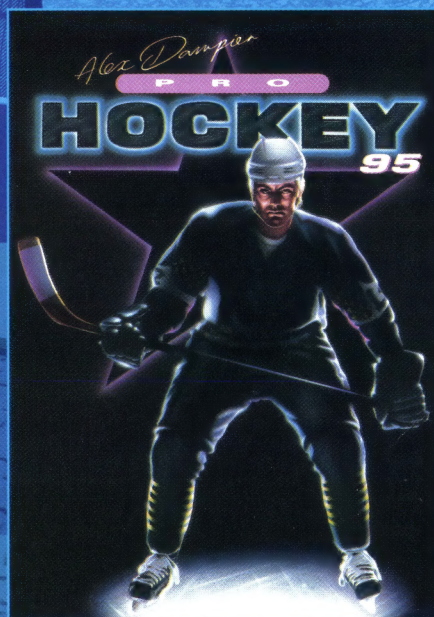
"Superb looking"
PC Home

"A challenger to EA's NHL"
PC Gamer

"One of the best hockey sims to date"
PC Zone

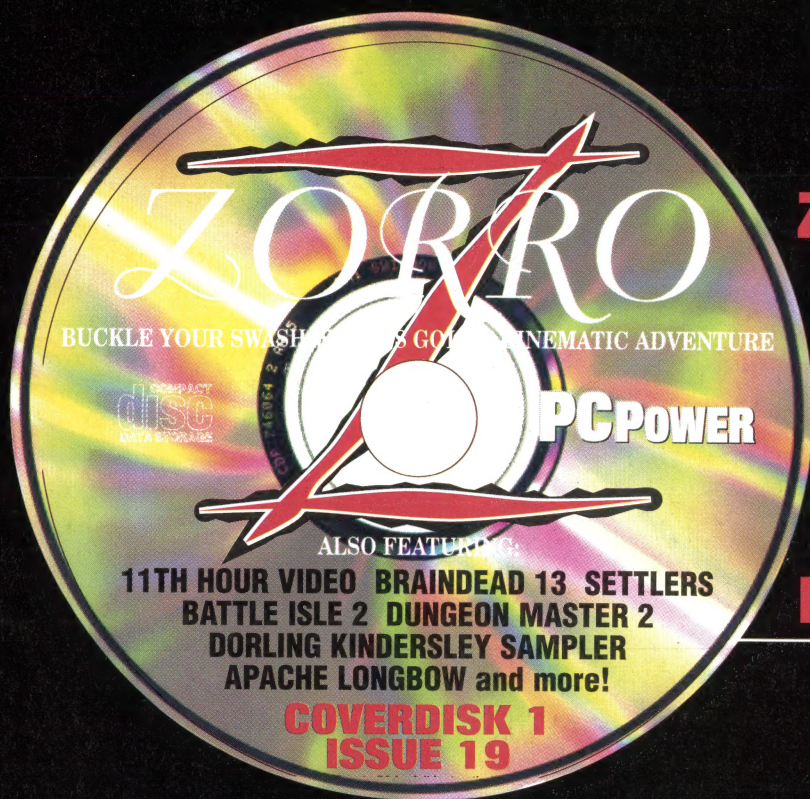
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IBM PC and CD ROM

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ON THIS MONTH'S COVERDISKS...



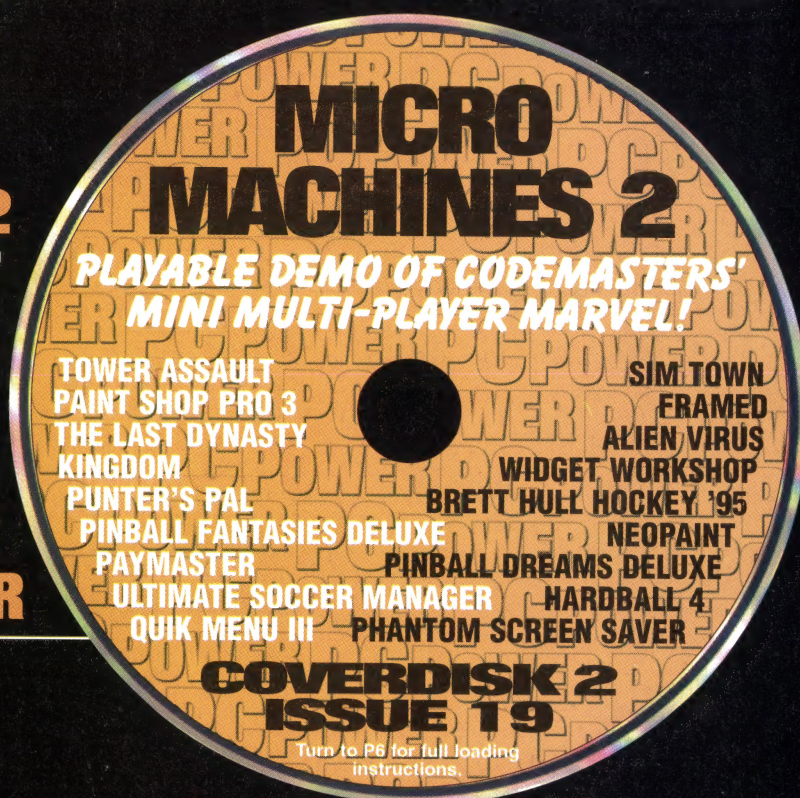
ZORRO
DUNGEON MASTER II
BRAINDEAD 13
11TH HOUR VIDEO
BATTLE ISLE 2
APACHE LONGBOW
BOBBY FISCHER CHESS

and a whole load more!

COVER CD 1

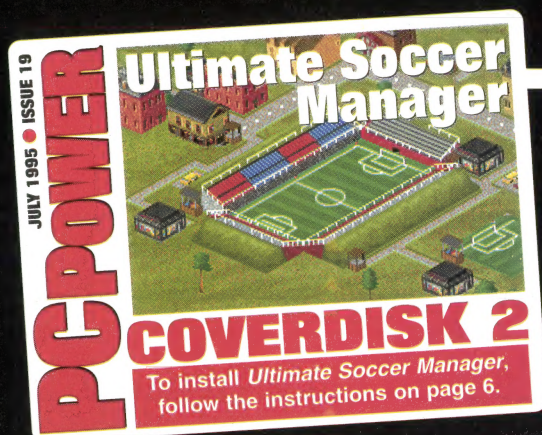
MICRO MACHINES 2
TOWER ASSAULT
BRETT HULL '95
PINBALL DREAMS/
FANTASIES DELUXE
ULTIMATE SOCCER
MANAGER

and a veritable orange-load more!



COVERDISK 2
ISSUE 19

Turn to P6 for full loading instructions.



MICRO MACHINES 2

Matchbox-sized action with this playable demo of Codemasters' mini masterpiece!

ULTIMATE SOCCER MANAGER

Dig out that nasty sheepskin coat and bag of bungs for this playable demo of Impressions' football management simulation!

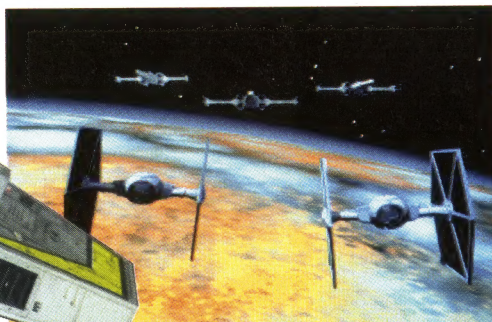
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WINDOWS**

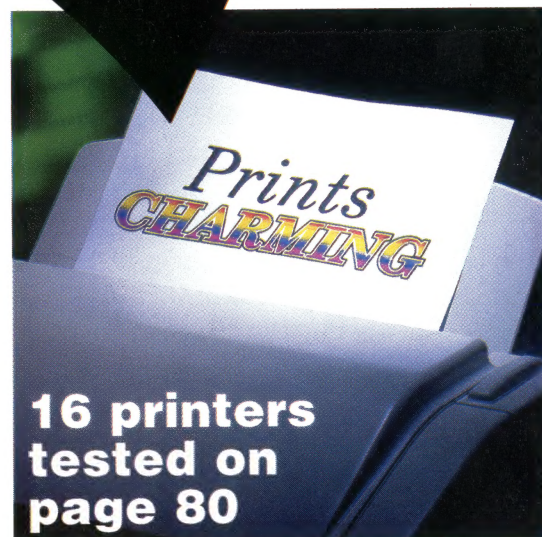


**Windows '95
tested - see page 30!**

E'S ARE GOOD!



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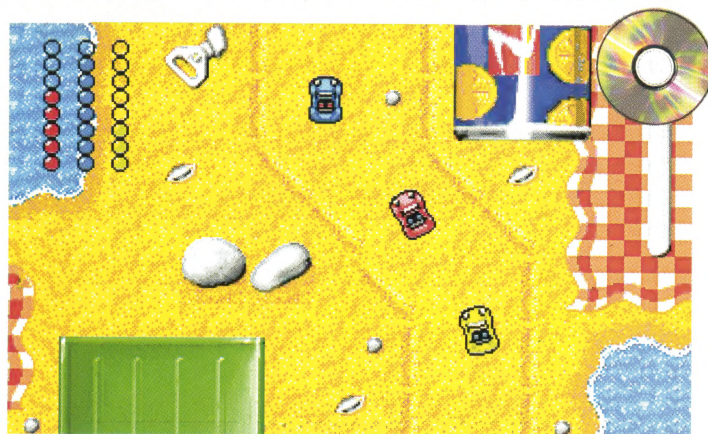
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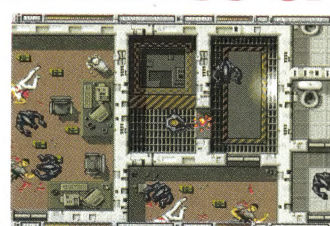
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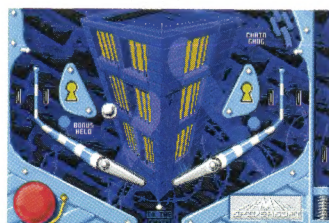
Vroom! Vroom! Miniature mayhem with *Micro Machines 2!*

PLUS PLAYABLE DEMOS OF**ZORRO**

"Zorro! Zorro! Zorrooooo!" as the old theme music used to go. But is the fat bloke in it?

**TOWER ASSAULT**

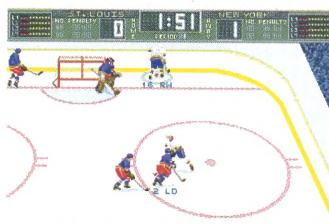
Pull on your best Sigourney Weaver curly wig and large trainers for some bug blasting!

**PINBALL DELUXE**

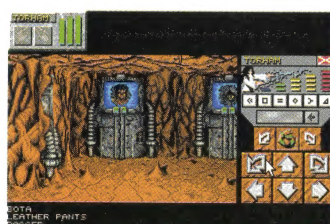
In both *Dreams* and *Fantasies* flavours, no less. Tommy, can you hear me?

**ULTIMATE SOCCER MANAGER**

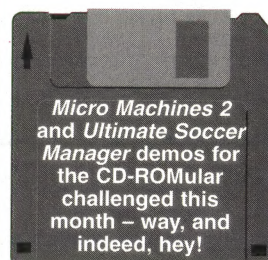
Be as crooked as they come in this "Do I not like that" sim. Nasty coat not included.

**BRETT HULL '95**

Who he? Oh, some Yank with most of his teeth missing. Ice hockey a-go-go!

**DUNGEON MASTER II**

Put on your anorak, sorry, chain-mail armour, and descend into those dank dungeons.

2 DISK SPECIAL

Micro Machines 2 and *Ultimate Soccer Manager* demos for the CD-ROMular challenged this month – way, and indeed, hey!



Coverdisks

Micro Machines 2

INSTALLATION

Insert the floppy disk into your drive. From the A: prompt, type **PCPOWER** to start installing the demo to **C:\MM2DEMO**. To run the demo, type **MM2**.

WHAT'S IT ALL ABOUT?

Enter the cockpit, turn the key and "Gentlemen, start your engines." Unless you are a student of the Nigel Mansell School of Motoring and fail to get round the first corner, you will experience one of the most addictive racing games ever coded for the PC, with the full version allowing up to eight players to simultaneously race each other.

CONTROLS

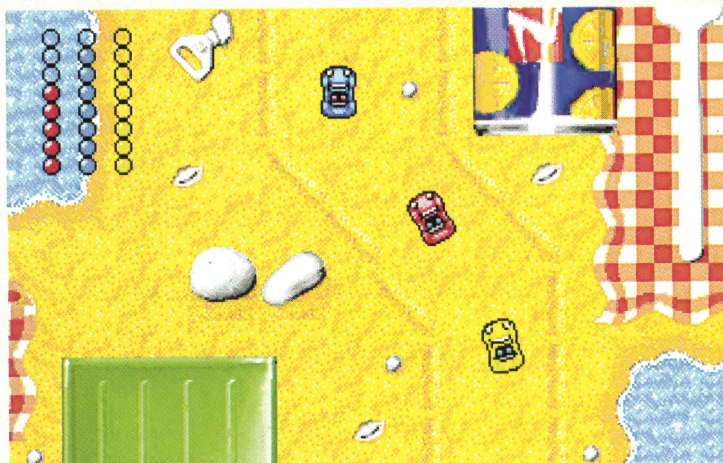
Keyboard driven.

Up - Q

Down - A

Left - O

Right - P



Ultimate Soccer Manager

INSTALLATION

Insert the floppy disk into the drive. To begin installation, type **PCPOWER** at the A: prompt. The demo will install to **C:\USM**. To start the demo, type **USM**.

WHAT'S IT ALL ABOUT?

As well as being team manager, this footy strategy allows you to run the business aspects and build new stands for your, hopefully, loyal supporters. At long last a game that includes the sleazier aspects of our national game, such as gambling, match-rigging and illegal payoffs to other managers. (See Steve Hill's superbly written review on page 60). (Did you write that bit, Steve? - Ed)

CONTROLS

Mouse driven.

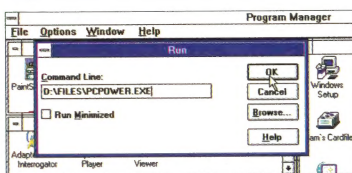


If your PC fails to read a CD-ROM, return the disk to PC POWER (Disk Returns), FREEPOST, Paragon House, St Peter's Road, Bournemouth, Dorset BH1 2JS.

THE COVERDISKS HAVE CHANGED! READ THIS!

From this month, PC POWER is employing a new Windows-based menu system as used by other Paragon magazines such as CD-ROM User. This allows us to produce a friendlier and more attractive front end to our cover CD-ROMs. The program must be run in Windows and will not work under DOS. During the next few months new features will be added to the menu, so your thoughts on what we might include will be very welcome.

INSTALLING AND USING YOUR PC POWER COVERDISK

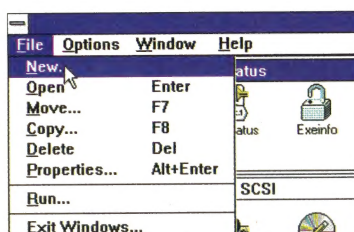


Quick Start

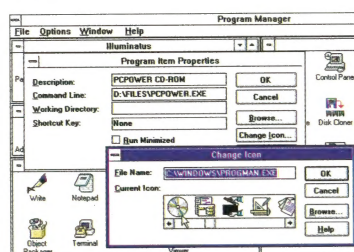
To get the disk up and running quickly, open the **FILE** menu from the Windows program manager then select **RUN** and type **D:\FILES\PCPOWER.EXE** and click on **OK**.

Installing an Icon

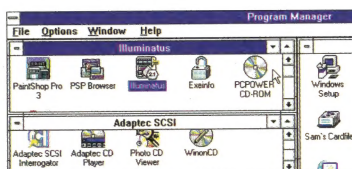
From Program Manager, click on **FILE**, select **NEW** then when the **NEW PROGRAM** box appears



select **PROGRAM ITEM** and click on **OK**.

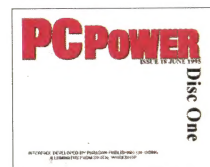


Type **PCPOWER** in the description line, then **D:\FILES\PCPOWER.EXE** in the command line. To change the actual icon, click on **CHANGE** and select one of the displayed icons (a good one is the CD icon). Now click **OK** and a message will appear asking "... do you want to continue?" Ignore this and click **YES**.



You now have an icon on your desktop which can be used for both of this issue's coverdisks and for future coverdisks.

PC POWER MENU SYSTEM



Wait for the main menu to appear after the loading screen.

Gametek Special



From the main menu choose the game you wish to install or run.

FRONTIER

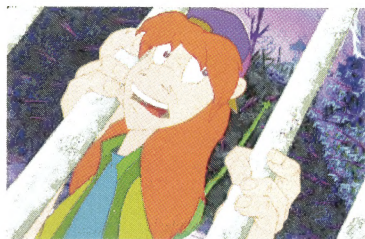


To install, click the relevant button and when the program installation is completed you can return to the menu.

COVERDISK 1

Braindead 13 INSTALLATION

To run the demo, go to the CD-ROM drive and enter the FILES directory. Now type **BD13**.



WHAT'S IT ALL ABOUT?

BrainDead 13 promises Disney cartoon style graphics, stunning sound and music as well as great gameplay. Find out for yourself as you hurtle around the castle of Dr Neurosis, avoiding the increasingly cunning plans of his half pet, half human servant, Fritz.

CONTROLS

Keyboard driven.
Cursor keys.

Digitised Video: "The Making of the 11th Hour"

INSTALLATION

To run the video clip in DOS, enter the FILES directory on the PC POWER CD-ROM and type **11HOUR**.

Zorro

INSTALLATION

From the front end, install the files to your hard drive. Once installed, from the game directory C:\ZORRO type **ZORRO** to run the demo. You will also need to add the switch **D=64** to your EMM386. EXE line in your CONFIG.SYS file.

WHAT'S IT ALL ABOUT?

Play the legendary Zorro in his



WHAT'S IT ALL ABOUT?

Watch the trailer to the forthcoming release (now delayed to October) from the team who brought you *7th Guest*. The video includes clips from the game, behind the scenes footage with cast and crew filming the actual game, and interviews with the games' designers. The video was digitised by Merit Studios using their Merit Video System (MVS); take a look at our feature on Merit studios on page 36.

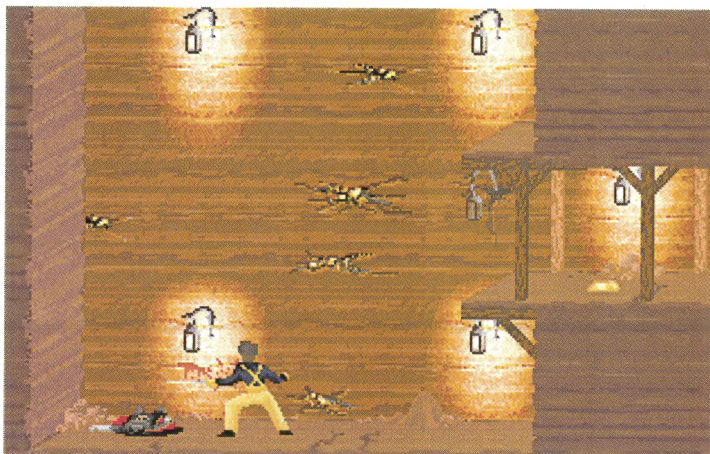
CONTROLS

None

never ending quest to protect the poor and defeat the evil Don Cortez and his gang of bandits. Cortez has found a map of a mine, sealed by priests to protect a hoard of gold. The demo features a level of the mine to explore.

CONTROLS

Mouse or joystick driven.



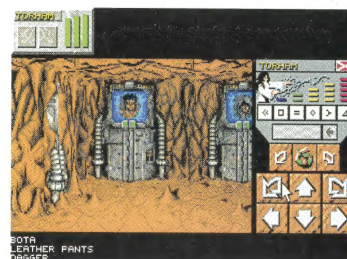
Dungeon Master II: The Legend of Skullkeep

INSTALLATION

After installing from the front end, exit to DOS and go to the games directory on the C: drive. From C:\SKULDEMO, type **SKULDEMO** to run the game. To configure the sound card, type **SETUP** in the SKULDEMO directory.

WHAT'S IT ALL ABOUT?

The long awaited sequel to the classic game retains all the features of the original. *DM2* includes a new world of villages, forests and temples to explore outside the keep which must be recaptured to gain control of the Zoi link. The game promises to be the most realistic



role-playing world ever created, where real-time combat combines with finely tuned traps and puzzles to test the player's logic and reflexes.

CONTROLS

Mouse driven.

Eyewitness Encyclopedia of Science
Stowaway
The Way Things Work

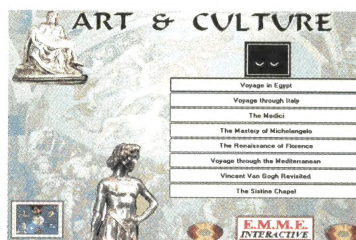
CONTROLS

Mouse driven.

EMME Interactive Preview

INSTALLATION

From the front end, install the demo to your hard drive. The PC POWER menu will close down and a new group and icon will be created in Windows.



WHAT'S IT ALL ABOUT?

Explore this preview of future releases from EMME Interactive, with six sections to look at. Ranging from Human Discovery to Family and Health, there is something for everyone here.

CONTROLS

Mouse driven.

Assembly CD '94 Preview

INSTALLATION

The demo can be run directly from the front end, you will first see a program to set up your sound card settings, once you have saved these the Assembly menu will appear. If you experience any problems, try running the program from DOS; some of the sequences require up to 610Kb of

Dorling Kindersley Sampler



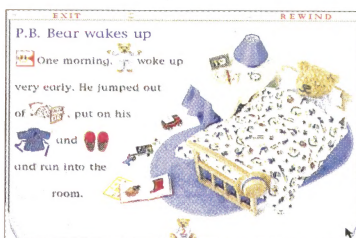
INSTALLATION

From the front end, click on Install. The sampler will install a small number of files to your hard drive and create a program group and icons in Windows. The front end will close down allowing the DK demos to run straight away.

WHAT'S IT ALL ABOUT?

A selection of rolling demos of the new releases from Dorling Kindersley. Renowned for their superb paper-based reference and educational publications, the company moved over into the multimedia arena and continue to release ground-breaking titles. If you don't believe it, have a look at the following titles.

Eyewitness Encyclopedia of Nature
Eyewitness History of the World
PB Bear's Birthday Party
World Reference Atlas
In case you haven't seen them yet, also on the sampler are demos of these releases from last year.
The Ultimate Human Body



conventional memory. The sound setup program, **SETUP**, and the actual program, **PCGUI**, are both found in the root of the PC Power CD-ROM.



WHAT'S IT ALL ABOUT?

Sample the work of the leading creators of graphics and music on the PC. Each piece won its place on the CD after a weekend of competition to find the best work of the worlds' programmers.

For further information, contact: Shatz Creations Ltd, Vigilant House, 120 Wilton Road, London SW1V 1JL Tel: (0171) 233 9924.

E-mail: pshatz@creations.easynet.co.uk

CONTROLS

Mouse or keyboard driven.

Apache Longbow INSTALLATION

To play the animation from DOS, enter the FILES directory on the CD-ROM, typing **DIGITAL** to start.

WHAT'S IT ALL ABOUT?

Taken from the helicopter simulation, see some of the impressive rendered



sequences that provide the backdrop to the full game.

Settlers INSTALLATION

To play the demo from the CD-ROM, enter the FILES directory, typing **SETTLE** to run.

WHAT'S IT ALL ABOUT?

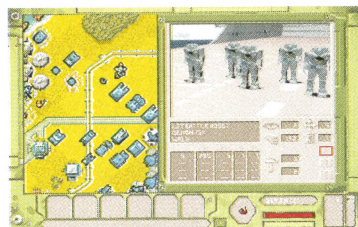
Along the same lines as *Populous* but set in the middle ages. Locate a tranquil location for your castle and then build up a village with your loyal subjects producing food and equipment for a peaceful life. Sounds cool? Well unfortunately you have neighbours, no not the Australian kind, but another tribe who have taken a liking to your castle and lands.

CONTROLS

Mouse driven.

Battle Isle 2 INSTALLATION

To install the game to your hard drive, enter the CD front end and click on the Install button. After installation, enter DOS and go to the directory of the demo (the default is **C:\BLUEBYTE\BI2**). To run the game, type **BI2**.



WHAT'S IT ALL ABOUT?

The game revolves around death and destruction in the struggle between two armies to take control of the battle island. Watch the opposition's equipment explode after a barrage of armour-piercing shells makes its mark.

CONTROLS

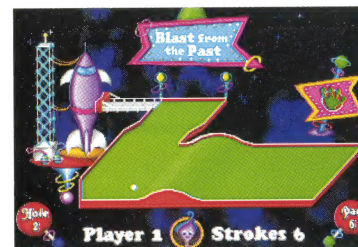
Mouse driven.

Fuzzy's World of Miniature Space Golf INSTALLATION

To run the shareware game from the CD-ROM, enter DOS and in the FILES directory, type **GOLF**.

WHAT'S IT ALL ABOUT?

Can you imagine playing golf in space? Bizarrely enough, it has



actually been done. This is a golf game with a difference, forget about the normal rules of gravity and all that maths rubbish, just hit and hope.

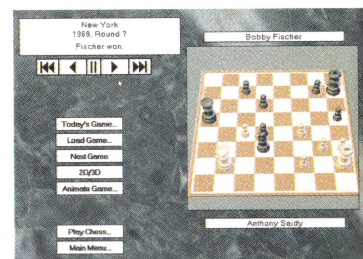
CONTROLS

Mouse driven.

Bobby Fischer Teaches Chess

INSTALLATION

From the front end, click to install the game to your hard drive. Once installed, move to the directory **C:\BFTC** and type **BFTC** to run the game.



WHAT'S IT ALL ABOUT?

If you are always getting beaten by your friends or by your PC on its easiest level, then Bobby Fischer can improve your chess skills. There are over 300 chess lessons included, as well as an interactive history of the game. Also, the demo features classic Grand Master matches to review and take part in at any time.

CONTROLS

Mouse driven.

COVERDISK 2

Micro Machines 2

INSTALLATION

Install the game from the front end. Once installed, exit to DOS, moving to the game directory **C:\MM2DEMO**. To start the game, type **MM2**.

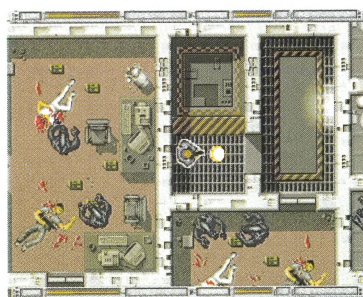
WHAT'S IT ALL ABOUT?

Enter the cockpit, turn the key and "Gentlemen, start your engines." Unless you are a student of the Nigel Mansell School of Motoring and fail to get round the first corner, you will experience one of the most addictive racing games ever coded for the PC, with the full version allowing up to eight players to race simultaneously.

CONTROLS

Keyboard driven.

Up - Q Down - A Left - O Right - P



Tower Assault INSTALLATION

The install program will make a new directory (default **C:\GAMES\TOWER**). Once in DOS, from the directory type **TA** to run. Sound card can be setup during installation.

WHAT'S IT ALL ABOUT?

Blast your way through an alien outpost, destroying aliens intent on eat-



ing their way through humanity.

CONTROLS

Keyboard driven.

Cursor keys to move.

Space bar to shoot.

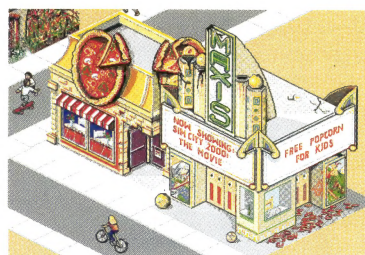
Sim Town INSTALLATION

The setup program for Windows will create a new program group called

Games and a icon to run *Sim Town* in the normal way. The PC Power front end will close down allowing the demo to be run by clicking on the icon.

WHAT'S IT ALL ABOUT?

This latest simulation brings together the best aspects of *Sim City 2000*, plus added enhancements to allow younger players to experience the joy and anguish of designing and



running a metropolis. The idea is to construct an environmentally friendly town, adding centres of learning and fun as well as life's little necessities – like a roof over the heads of your sims! You can even become a voyeur and watch your sims in their own homes, *Sliver* style, albeit without Sharon Stone.

CONTROLS

None.

Widget Workshop INSTALLATION

The install routine will add a new group called Games (if not already created) and an icon to start the rolling demo.

WHAT'S IT ALL ABOUT?

Widget Workshop is one of the most original games to hit the PC this spring. An excellent program for kids – you have total control of a scientist's laboratory to invent your own Widgets to solve the day to day hassles of modern living or just create more for everyone else.

Brett Hull '95 INSTALLATION

Once you have clicked on the Install push-button in the front end, the game files will be copied to **C:\BHDemo**. To start, type **DEMO** from the directory whilst in DOS.



WHAT'S IT ALL ABOUT?

This sports simulation is fully featured allowing you to manage your side before the action on the ice begins, and also control your team during the game in response to your opponents' strategy. You have the choice of numerous seasons and leagues, as well as a special coach mode in which you can alter the players skills.

CONTROLS

Keyboard driven.

Cursor keys to move.

Enter to select.

Hardball 4 INSTALLATION

Once installed, exit to DOS. Now move to the **C:\HB4DEMO** directory. To run, type **HB4DEMO**.

WHAT'S IT ALL ABOUT?

You walk calmly and confidently back out to the plate, bottom of the ninth, the bases are loaded... Experience some of the nail-biting tension of baseball in this stylish sports sim. *Hardball 4* features full control over pitching and different types of hits as well as realistic digitised graphics.

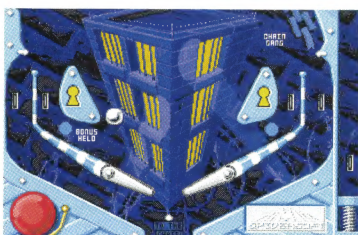
CONTROLS

Keyboard driven.

Cursor keys for direction.

Enter to select.

Pinball Dreams Deluxe & Pinball Fantasies Deluxe



INSTALLATION

You can install both the *Pinball* demos from either of the front end screens. Once installed, type **PDD_DEMO** to run the *Dreams* demo, type **PFD_DEMO** to run the *Fantasies* demo. Both should be run from **C:\21STCENT** in DOS.

WHAT'S IT ALL ABOUT?

Two class pinball sims for the price of none. *Deluxe* versions feature more tables, harder levels and impressive CD quality sound. If that's not enough the tables have a hectic multi-ball feature.

CONTROLS

Keyboard driven.

Shift keys – flippers.

Enter – select/fire.

Kingdom "The Far Reaches"

INSTALLATION

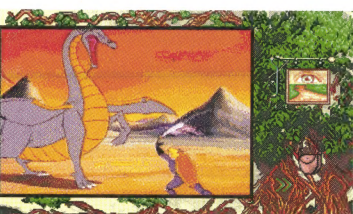
The game files will be copied into **C:\KINGDOM**. To run this demo, type **KINGDEMO** from the directory whilst in DOS.

WHAT'S IT ALL ABOUT?

The first in a series of arcade adventures, *Kingdom* sends you, the hero, in search of a missing amulet. The game features impressive full motion video, digitised speech and atmospheric music.

CONTROLS

Mouse driven.



Paint Shop Pro 3

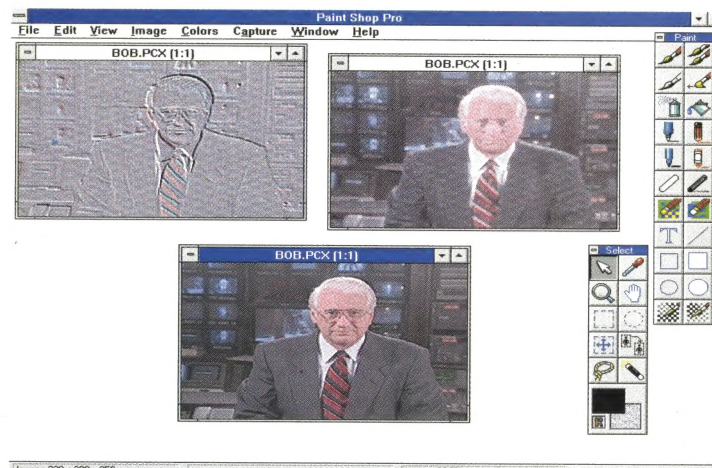
INSTALLATION

After installation from the front end, a new Windows group and icon will be created.

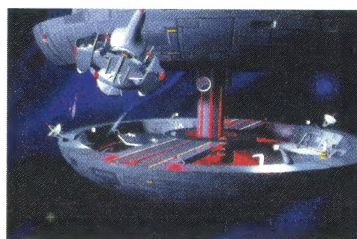
WHAT'S IT ALL ABOUT?

Paint Shop Pro 3 is the latest ver-

sion of the best image handling package available on shareware. This product allows conversion between many different file formats, filters to bring your images to life, excellent colour and palette features and standard image editing tools.



The Last Dynasty



INSTALLATION

Once you have clicked on the Install button, the front end will close down. The Install program will create a new Windows group (called **SIERRA**) and two icons. First, click on the setup icon to configure your sound card etc. Double click the game icon to start running the demo.

WHAT'S IT ALL ABOUT?

You have just discovered that the space dynasty you are part of, and have been serving all your life, is corrupt. You and your friend join the space pirates in a battle against the evil tyrant, Lord Iron. The game includes both adventure and space battle sequences. The stunning graphics and music create a believable setting to this game which took two years to develop.

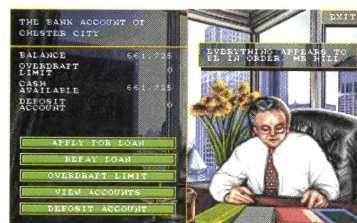
CONTROLS

Keyboard driven.

Ultimate Soccer Manager

INSTALLATION

After installation from the front end, go into DOS and move to **C:\USM**. To start the game, type **USM**. The demo only allows you to select Brighton and Hove Albion with which to display your managerial talents.



WHAT'S IT ALL ABOUT?

As well as being team manager, this footy strategy allows you to run the business aspects and build new stands for your, hopefully, loyal supporters. At long last a game that includes the sleazier aspects of our national game, such as gambling, match-rigging and illegal payoffs to other managers. (See Steve Hill's superbly written review on page 60).

CONTROLS

Mouse driven.

Paye Master INSTALLATION

Once you have clicked on the install push-button from the front end, follow the on-screen instructions. The program is installed to **C:\FREEPAY** by default and will automatically run. To run in future, enter the directory, typing **PAY** in DOS. Alternatively, setup a Windows icon for the program (this is similar to setting up the PC POWER icon as shown above – just use **C:\FREEPAY\PAY.EXE** as the command line).

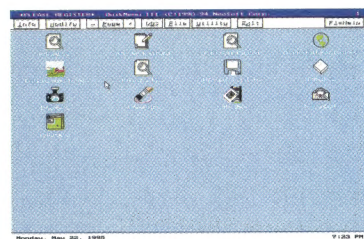
WHAT'S IT ALL ABOUT?

The program provides excellent help for all your payroll needs, with every feature you could possibly want to ensure smooth running of any system. Paye employees and sub-contractors, most frequencies of pay, variable amounts, sick and Maternity Pay, and printing of reports and

forms are just some of the options available.

Quik Menu III INSTALLATION

The program files are copied to **C:\QUIKMENU** directory. From DOS, type **QM** to run from the program directory.



WHAT'S IT ALL ABOUT?

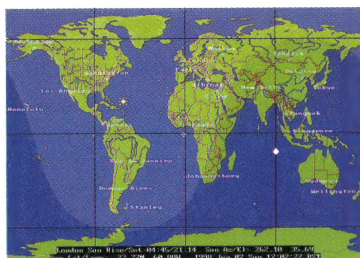
Bored with using the normal text-based DOS? Now you have an alternative. *Quik Menu III* offers a graphical front end which allows you to launch programs (including Windows), usage tracking, appointment manager, send and receive e-mail and much, much more.

Phantom Screen Saver INSTALLATION

The program is installed to **C:\PHANTOM**. To activate the screen saver, type **PHANTOM** in the program directory from DOS.

WHAT'S IT ALL ABOUT?

Concerned about the environment? This program will save energy (or so it claims, even though the PC is surely still switched on!) by running



animations and displaying images while you are away from your computer.

Geoclock INSTALLATION

The program is installed to **C:\GEO-CLOCK**. To start it in DOS, in the directory type **GO**.

WHAT'S IT ALL ABOUT?

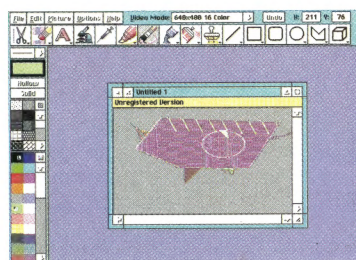
This special 'computerised sundial' allows you to understand time zones, locate areas of the planet which are in light or dark and lots more.

Neopaint Pro INSTALLATION

Once you have clicked on the install push button in the front end, the program will install to **C:\NEOPAINT**. To run the program, type **NEOPAINT** and to run the screen-grabber, type **NEOGRAB** in DOS.

WHAT'S IT ALL ABOUT?

This excellent DOS shareware package has all the features of a professional package costing ten times as much. Also included are sample images for you to play around with as well as a screen-grabber which allows you to capture DOS screens



and import them into any graphics application.

Neoshow Pro & Neobook Pro INSTALLATION

Both packages can be installed from the front end. Once installed, from DOS go to the **C:\NEOSHOW** directory, type **NEOSHOW** to run, and type **NEOBOOK** from the **C:\NEOBOOK** directory.

WHAT'S IT ALL ABOUT?

Another DOS based package, this latest version of the popular shareware multimedia presentation program (*Neoshow Pro*) includes support for the BMP format, image compression, and a font cache. It is also capable of displaying images with 16 million colours. *Neobook Pro* is a similar package which compiles multimedia publications as well as supporting usage of 32k and 64k colour video modes.

Punter's Pal INSTALLATION

The program will install to **C:\PAL5**. To run it, type **PAL5** from the associated directory.

WHAT'S IT ALL ABOUT?

Seem to be spending all your time at the bookies and returning home with empty pockets, muttering bitterly to yourself? (Eh, Steve – Ed) Then this is for you. Within two weeks you will be making millions – only joking, but this program will at least try. You are asked to enter the race details and form of the entrants then sit back and let your friendly PC forecast the result. (If it works – don't forget us at PC POWER).

Framed INSTALLATION

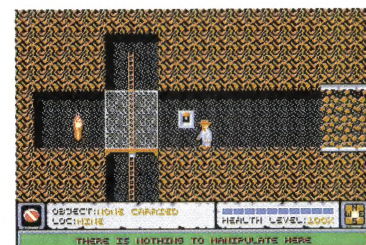
From the front end, click on the install push-button and the shareware game will install to **C:\FRAMED**. To run the game, type **FRAMED**.

WHAT'S IT ALL ABOUT?

Fancy a reminder of that long-forgotten era of the Speccy and C64? Then play this shareware platform adventure game. It was written for low-spec machines and will even run on a 286 processor, should you be still using anything so archaic.

CONTROLS

Keyboard driven.



If it won't work...

If a program refuses to run you should first take very careful notes of any error messages it reports. Write these down as they are normally the best indication of the nature of the error, but be aware that they can sometimes be misleading.

Changing the configuration of your machine can seriously affect the operation of programs which are already installed. For this reason, it is not recommended that you change the configuration of your machine directly. The safest way to tailor the computer's functions to those required by a game is to create a boot disk.

To do this, insert a blank disk in the floppy drive and type

FORMAT A: /S

This will format the disk and copy the necessary files for DOS to start from that drive.

Now your machine's configuration should be copied to the boot disk by typing

COPY C:\CONFIG.SYS A:

COPY C:\AUTOEXEC.BAT A:

This disk, when inserted into the drive during power-up, will configure your system exactly as normal, and this disk can safely be altered as the original configuration is still present on your hard disk. Simply boot without the disk inserted in the drive and all will be back to normal.

Memory Problems

If a program refuses to run and reports an error related to memory, this can be for one of

three reasons. The most common of these is that your memory may be configured as the wrong type. Alternatively, there may not be enough unused (free) memory, or you may simply not have enough memory installed in your machine.

EMS or XMS?

If your memory is not configured in the right way, the program will almost always report the type and amount of memory it was expecting to find. An example of this is 'Insufficient EMS memory, required 1024, found 64'. There are two ways to configure your memory, as EMS (expanded memory) or XMS (extended memory), and both are configured in the **A:\CONFIG.SYS** file on the boot disk. To alter this file, type

EDIT A:\CONFIG.SYS

This will enter the DOS text editor and allow you to change the file by hand. The **CONFIG.SYS** will contain a line which reads 'DEVICE=C:\DOS\EMM386.EXE' followed by a number of options. To configure your memory as EMS, the line should read 'DEVICE=C:\DOS\EMM386.EXE RAM'. To configure it as XMS, it should read 'DEVICE=C:\DOS\EMM386.EXE NOEMS'.

The amount of memory to allow for the type of memory appears after this, so for 1024 kilobytes of EMS memory, the line 'DEVICE=C:\DOS\EMM386.EXE RAM 1024' will do the trick. Remember to save the file after changing it.

Not Enough Free Memory

To find out how much free memory you have, you can type 'MEM' at the command prompt. This will result in a table showing how much of each type of memory is available. If your machine has enough memory installed to run the program, but the total amount of free memory is too low, then the best option is to type

EDIT A:\AUTOEXEC.BAT

Now we need to look for memory-intensive software such as *SmartDrive* – a program designed to speed up disk operations by using part of the memory to store data intended for the hard disk. If the line 'C:\WINDOWS\SMARTDRV.EXE' appears in this file, it should be removed and the file saved to the boot disk.

Disk Space Problems

If, during installation, a program reports insufficient disk space, you should use a program such as Windows file manager to remove unwanted files, but you should be careful not to delete important system files from the Windows or DOS directories.

Mouse Problems

Another common problem is that programs report an error when trying to use the mouse. This can be remedied by typing **C:\DOS\MOUSE.COM** immediately before running the program, or it can be added to the bottom of the

A:\AUTOEXEC.BAT file.

QEMM/DoubleSpace

If you are running the Quarterdeck Expanded Memory Manager (QEMM) to maximise the amount of conventional memory in your machine, then your machine will not react well to much of the software we run on our coverdisks. If you are not sure whether or not it is present in your system, look at the **A:\CONFIG.SYS** file and if the line 'DEVICE=C:\QEMM\QEMM.EXE' appears then QEMM is running on your system. To get round this problem, use the QEMM installation to remove QEMM from your system, copy the resulting **CONFIG.SYS** and **AUTOEXEC.BAT** files to the boot disk as before, then re-install QEMM to your hard disk.

If you are running DoubleSpace to increase the size of your hard disk, then **DON'T**. The only way to remove this abomination is to decompress the entire disk drive and start pretty much from scratch. It stops many programs from running properly, particularly games software.

And Finally....

Of course, if you still can't get things running, then the disk hotline is available to help with your queries on (01202) 200206, 10AM-6PM – weekdays only!). We hope you enjoy using the PC POWER cover disks and appreciate any feedback you can give.

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Game warden to the events rhino



WING COMMANDER IV FILMING STARTS

A gold party invitation handed out by Electronic Arts at the E3 show prompted a rather exclusive party; held not in a traditional venue such as hot disco or working man's club, but on the set of the forthcoming super sequel, *Wing Commander IV*. Filming started at the end of May with Mark Hamill back in the hotseat as Col Chris Blair, and Malcolm McDowell, John Rhys-Davies and that guy from *Herman's Head* all confirmed.

EA state that the filming of *WCIV* will be far more complex and therefore expensive due to the fact that real sets are to be used far more extensively, rather than just endless scenes with green screens. The reason for this is that the director (still Chris Roberts of EA Canada) wants to use fancy moving camera angles and various other theatrical tricks to create a 'big movie' feel.

The game itself will be similar to the first in that you venture out on missions to attack the enemy and can wander around the Confederation ship Lexington, but this time the enemies are rebellious

Confederation members and you will have far more control over the game.

If, for example, you take to the big black in your Tiger attack ship, you will be able to command a whole wing of such ships and send them into the fray at will. There will also be more choice of things to do on the Lexington, perhaps even structuring your own missions. Roberts is keen to make this the ultimate interactive movie, and indeed *WCIII* has been the most successful attempt at the genre so far. *WCIV* looks to be even better. The game hopes to be out for either Christmas '95 or early '96. For more information, call Electronic Arts on (01753) 549442 or alternatively turn to page 18 for the full report on E3.



1 Blatant celebrity pose alert! Our editor shares a joke with Mark Hamill, one-time Luke Skywalker. Doesn't he look old? 2 Malcolm McDowell, star of *A Clockwork Orange* and *Star Trek: Generations*, and brother of Roddy. Or not. 3 Chris Roberts - Mr *Wing Commander* himself. 4 You an' me agaisht the world, mate.



DO PCS DREAM OF ELECTRIC SHEEP?

Big news from the E3 show is that Virgin have secured the licence to release *Blade Runner* on the PC, a conversion of the 1982 Ridley Scott sci-fi epic which has since gained cult status and spawned a 'Director's Cut' which duly sold thousands of copies on video. The game is due in August 1996 so expect at least two magazines to stick it on the cover this month and hundreds of speculative articles as to the game's content from now on.

Blade Runner the game will be programmed by Virgin's fabergé egg, Westwood studios, based in Las Vegas. Martin Alper, CEO of VIE told PC POWER, "We are committing tremendous resources to the project, which won't be just a rehash of the



Blade Runner: The Game. Only 13 years after the film was released!

film, but a truly interactive experience that exploits all the wonderful opportunities provided by the original storyline." Which roughly translates as "It'll have bugger all to do with the

film, but it will look good."

Hopes are high for an excellent adaptation and indeed the inspiration is almost unbounded, but let's hope noble anti-hero Harrison Ford doesn't translate into a tiny digitised sprite running horizontally across some platforms shooting hundreds of Rutger Hauers. Cynical, moi? Do us proud Westwood.

DARK TIMES

At the recent E3 in Los Angeles, Electronic Arts let slip that their latest interactive movie, *The Darkening*, began filming at Pinewood studios at the end of May. By the time you read this, members of PC POWER will have already been to visit the sets and spoken to the stars, who at the time of going to print could include Christopher Walken and possibly Harvey Keitel.

The *Total Recall*-ish plot concerns a character called Lev Arris, whom



It's Harv! Loved you in *Saturn 3*. Make that weird howling noise you do in all your films, will you?

you play, who has lost his memory on a strange planet and must solve the riddle of his own identity. The game sounds a bit *System Shockish* and in fact the sequel to the sleeper hit of last year could well prove to appear in the first quarter of 1996. We can't wait.

BAD VOODOO, MAN

Remember the Peter Gabriel and Bob Dylan Interactive CDs? Well now the Rolling Stones have got in on the act with Voodoo Lounge Interactive, a visual spectacular that includes all the band's greatest tracks, plus a chance to hang out with the dinosaurs of the rock world. Full review soon.



How Steve's tongue felt after going bowling last Friday night.

WHOOOPS!

Many apologies to Silica Systems who had their NEC CDR-271 CD-ROM Kit wrongly attributed to Datrontech in issue 17. This is simply not the case, and whoever made the mistake has now been roundly whipped. The correct supplier of the kit is of course Silica on the following number (0181) 308 0888. Tell them we sent you.



Silica, yes? Yes.



What do you call this monitor when it's not attached to anything? The Lone Ranger!

HOME ON THE RANGE

In the market for a seriously smart monitor? Look no further than the new Ranger 20S2 from Aydin Controls. This 20" entry level CAD screen features Autosync, low radiation and the significantly high resolution of 1280x1024 and is perfect for specialised screen work or high definition design. But let's cut to the chase, unless you really value your gaming clarity then you're not even going to consider it for mere games-playing, but if you are running your own business and want performance at a price then you'll be interested to know that it costs just £1168. For more information, call Aydin Controls on (01462) 458804.

THE CHEAPEST PCs IN THE UK?

Burnley-based Mr PC, a subsidiary of the Granville Technology Group (who also own Time Computer Systems) have just announced their own brand of PC at extremely low prices. What do we mean by cheap, well how about a P100 for £1,339? Or a 486DX4-100 multimedia with an 850Mb hard disk, 8Mb of memory and a Quad speed CD-ROM drive for only £999! We will be reviewing some Mr PC products next issue and



Koss speakers, fousands of 'em! Don't shoot until you see the whites of their eyes!

so we advise you to wait until you see what we think of them before buying, but it certainly seems like the best deals in town and even our resident technical expert, Jon Pyle, is thinking of buying one. For more information, contact Mr PC on (01282) 777888.

YOU NEVER FORGET YOUR FIRST KOSS

Logic 3's latest range of speakers are from Kos in the US, a selection of high quality magnetically shielded

units that feature bass and treble boosts and improved stereo sound, plus the famous Koss lifetime 'no questions asked' guarantee. For more information on this range of speakers, contact Spectravideo on (0181) 900 0024.

SOUNDBITE

Who did Infogrames get to play the big bad boss in their latest Wall Street power struggle game, *AIV Networks*? Why none other than crusty action man, James Coburn – our man Flint! Coburn plays Dwight Owen-Barnes, the MD of the AIV corporation in the game due out soon. Full report from Los Angeles this issue.

DESCENT 2 ON THE WAY!

Whilst plumbing through an Interplay sampler disk from the E3 show, what did we uncover but a few screen shots from their much-hushed up *Descent 2*, the sequel to the high selling *Descent* which is one of our favourite games. No information on the actual game yet, as Interplay are staying tight-lipped, but a late '95 or Christmas release seems probable. Stay tuned for more information.



Descent 2, coming right atcha. Way, and indeed hey.

RECOMMENDED GAMES

Every month we recommend our favourite games to you, the PC POWER readers. These will be only the creme de la creme of software and at least one of them should definitely be in your collection.

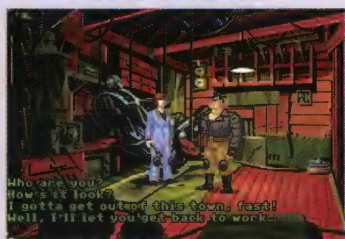
Bioforce



EA ● Power Rating: 92% PA

It's got a green claw on the cover and you can beat someone to death with their own severed arm – this is our kind of game! *Bioforce* is the spring sleeper hit from EA and it's essential gaming for anyone who wants a bit of a challenge and a truly filmic storyline. The graphics are weird looking, but work well and the animation is superb. A scorcher!

Full Throttle



Virgin ● Power Rating: 88%

A seamless graphic adventure of epic proportions. This LucasArts classic is funny, thrilling and highly enjoyable. The easy to use interface makes *Full Throttle* simple to play if you're a beginner, but the complex and adult plot is absorbing enough for old veterans. Animation is top class and we fully expect this to make greasy bikers trendy.

Virtual Pool



Interplay ● Power Rating 87%

Without doubt the best pool game on the PC today, *VP* is smooth and has tons of options such as different opponents, backgrounds, types of game and many different cueing actions. Being able to rotate the table at will is disorientating at first, but quickly becomes second nature. The ball inertia is excellent and the movie trick shots are neat.

Super Street Fighter II Turbo



Gametek ● Power Rating 91% PA

It's big, it's bad and it's definitely the best arcade beat-'em-up on the PC. Graphics are coin-op perfect, but there seems to be a problem with sound on some versions. Plenty of options and characters, and the number of special moves alone guarantees months of play. The joystick is the essential control method and the violence is unbounded.

CHEET YOURSELF

A compilation of tips, tricks and other software and hardware related pearls of wisdom known as the *Cheet Sheet*, has come to our attention this month. After receiving a massive following on Compuserve, Eurowave have decided to release the *Cheet Sheet* magazine as a stand-alone CD.



What? Keith's tips page not good enough for you?

The Windows and DOS compatible disk contains the first 35 issues of the magazine plus some extra helpings of treasure that can only be found deep within its many DOS directories. If you want a copy of this encyclopaedia send a cheque for £20 to: Eurowave Leisure Ltd, 28-29 Great Sutton Street, London EC1V 0DS, or give them a bell on (0171) 251 4666.

If however, you wish to subscribe to the monthly edition of *Cheet Sheet* on 3.5" disk, give Wayne Roberts a call on (01822) 833765 and for a minimal charge, a year's subscription to cheat's paradise could be yours.

WE'VE MOVED!

Paragon Publishing, producers of a veritable avalanche of superb computer magazines, including PC POWER, CD-ROM User and INTERNET & COMMS TODAY, have changed their address as of now. You may have noticed that the address within PC POWER has changed, but for those of you who still don't know here's our shiny new office address. All competition entries, returned disks and letters must now be sent to PC POWER, Paragon House, St Peter's Road, Bournemouth, Dorset BH1 2JS.

GREAT VIDEO COVERS OF OUR TIME

Number 999: *Silver Bears*

Michael Caine has made a few good films in his time, but he's made far more which are really crap. Guess which category *Silver Bears* falls into? This 1977 alleged comedy, seen by absolutely nobody, stars old "Get the wheels in line" and Cybill Shepherd, though from the cover you'd be forgiven for not realising this. Alfie's in the middle, but Cyb's nowhere to be seen, unless she's dyed her hair, grown a moustache and had her face stung by a very large bee. Anti-smoking groups would normally object to the tobacco motif, but as nobody except Mrs Mickelwhite will ever buy this video they'll probably let it pass. "Zulus! Fousands of 'em!" Quite.



kids CORNER

Paul Mallinson, editor of CD-ROM PC Kids, kicks off a new column featuring all the latest from the colourful world of edutainment.

✓ missable
✓✓✓✓ Unmissable



FUN SCHOOL IN TIME

Europress Software
(01625) 859333 £39.99

I must say that I was impressed by Europress Software's *Fun School in Time*. On the surface the graphics are nothing special but the highly educational software within is fun, simple to use and – lordy, lordy – quite original! As Rik and Suzi, the user is led through different historical periods that involve many different styles of edutainment – physics and ecology are placed in the spotlight, with most tasks represented as simple resource management sims. Overall, *Fun School in Time* is an excellent program which, despite the slightly garish presentation, is an absorbing piece of software to get into.

Rating

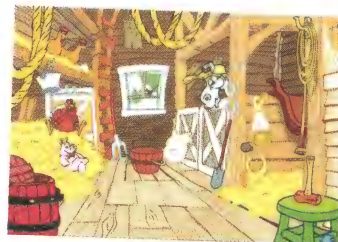
✓✓✓✓

TUNELAND

7th Level (01223) 425558 £29.99

As a point 'n' click adventure into

the all-singing, all-dancing world of the nursery rhyme, *Tuneland* absolutely cannot be faulted. Although lacking a tad in interactivity and scope, the quality of the cartoon animations (and the songs themselves) is astounding to say that this thing runs on a PC. Sure,



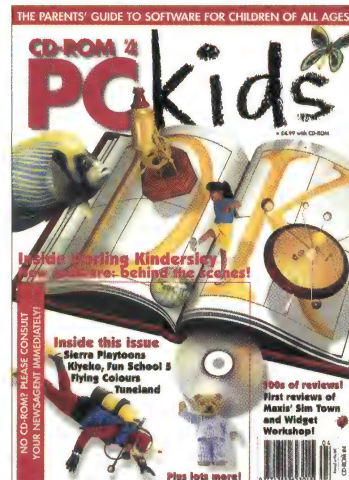
repeated listenings will no doubt start to grate the ear of the over five year-old, but the kids will love it – it's one of those up-beat titles that just forces you to smile when you first encounter it. *Tuneland* comes highly recommended (the supplied lyric and colouring book is excellent), especially at the reasonable

Rating

FUN SCHOOL IN SPACE

Europress Software
(01625) 859333 £39.99

The second instalment in the Europress Fun School range, *Space* is aimed at the six to nine age range and deals more with geographical subjects as a teaching angle. Environmental issues are cleverly interwoven, as are familiar English and Maths-type problems (you never thought this was going to be all entertainment



CD-ROM PC Kids. It's about CD-ROMs. On PCs. For kids. Yeah? Nice angel fish, mind.



did you?) and the presentation is as high as the other titles in the *Fun School 5* series. This program is well constructed and succeeds in covering 'less popular' school subjects in a pleasing and enjoyable manner.

Rating

✓✓✓✓

CD-ROM PC Kids – the parent's guide to software for children of all ages – is a bimonthly magazine that is brought to you by the makers of PC POWER. Issue two, complete with cover-mounted CD, is available now priced £4.99.

TECHNOPLUS STAY IN CONTROL

Controller manufacturers Technoplus have just announced a new joypad that retails for the ultra low price of £12.99. The PC Control pad is colour co-ordinated to the IBM personal computer, that means it's grey

all over, and features three fire buttons and an eight-way thumb button for directional control.

You can also get the PC Gamepack which is a joypad that comes with an auto configuring game card; requiring no software driver disks and fitting neatly into an ISA slot. This gives you two switchable joystick ports and retails for £24.99 with a pad. For more information call Technoplus on (01604) 768711.



Joypads and stuff, for those who like that kind of thing.

TOUCHY FEELY MJN

MJN are scarcely out of the pages of PC POWER and now they've launched a new range of notebooks featuring the latest touchpad technology which aims to phase out the poor little mouse. The touchpad, as the name suggests, is just a flat section of sensitive material that translates delicate finger movements into bold sweeping gestures with the Windows pointer.

The first MJN notebook to feature the new touchpad is the PowerLite. Models start at £2,099 and go up to

£2,999 for the TFT colour screen. There will be a full review of the touchpad control system and if you want more information, contact MJN direct on (01282) 777555.



You can tell how small this notebook is from the backdrop of Levis material.



Shouldn't a web site be for Spider-man? You can't download the girls, sadly.

BATMAN CAUGHT IN WEB FOREVER

Warner Bros, the film company behind *Batman*, *Batman Returns* and now *Batman Forever* have just created a *Batman* site on the worldwide web. The site is intended primarily for information on the up-and-coming *Batman Forever* movie and will include artwork, trailers and storyboards. The front end is highly dramatic, with a Gotham city skyline highlighted by the Batman Bat-signal, and users can then travel across the city to the relevant areas such as Gotham library, gallery and cinema. You can even contact faithful family retainer, Alfred, who will help you around the site. The address to log onto the Batman web site is <http://batmanforever.com>. For more information on the site, call the Warner Bros press office on (0171) 734 8400.

CORE'S SHOCKING NEW GAME

Straight from the renowned Core Design stables is *Shellshock!*, a 3-D tank game similar in style to *Battlezone*, but featuring more up-to-date graphics and a stack of Silicon Graphics frontery for added atmosphere. The object of the game is to save your troops by covering them during full campaigns, and the game is set in a clichéd series of Arctic wastes, rolling fields and even the underground headquarters of the



A nice moody picture, from *Shellshock!*, of a piece of death-dealing, body-bursting, commie-killing hardware. Ooh, it makes me go all tingly just thinking about it.

The return of PC Envy, and another bragging owner who curiously seems to have regressed back to his childhood – literally! For some reason, since printing a picture of toddler Mark Slater, PC POWER readers have felt the need to send us pictures of their kids playing with their machines. Look, it's not big and it's not clever – we know Master Bruce here is only ten months old – how can he possibly expect to have bought a 486DX4-100? I mean, you'd have to be at least 16 months to do that, so stop trying to pull the wool over our eyes.

All you have to do to get your machine into this sad section of the magazine is to send us a photo of you, or your baby, or your horse, or your goldfish, with your PC and then include the details below. It's not an excuse for some serious technical discussions, just a chance to swell off about the size of your spec and the rigidity of your hard drive.

Send your specs to PC Envy, PC POWER magazine, Paragon House, St Peter's Road, Bournemouth,

enemy, although how a tank is supposed to fit in those tight corridors is a complete mystery as the only screen shots provided by Core are of the silky smooth intro sequence. *Shellshock!* will be on the shelves in August, but there will be a full demo on the next issue of PC POWER. For more information, contact Core Design on (01332) 297797.

DON'T DROP THE PILOT!

Logitech's new style Pilot Mouse is an enhanced version of the standard controller which features three buttons for the IBM compatible version and two for the Atari ST and Amiga models. The IBM version of the Pilot Mouse comes with MouseWare software which for example provides double click shortcuts in Windows. The mouse also contains a self-cleaning

Dorset BH1 2JS. This month Damien Bruce expounds the virtues of his DX4 and wins a copy of *NHL Hockey* by EA. Anybody complaining about the iffy prizes will be ridiculed down the phone. To be included in PC Envy you must give us your name, PC owned, est value, favourite games and pet name for your computer. This last one is very important as we want to have a laugh at your expense.

Name: Damien Anthony Bruce.

PC owned: AMD 486DX4-100MHz,

16Mb of RAM, Diamond Stealth 64, 2Mb DRAM VLB, SoundBlaster 16 Value, Enhanced VLB disk controller, 2 x Conner 850Mb hard drives, NEC CDR271 IDE quad speed CD-ROM, 14.4 Fax/modem, NE2000 plus Network card, Logic 3 Screen Beat Pro 50 speakers, Hewlett Packard Laser-jet 4 (with 8Mb of memory). Presumably this is for work, kids.

Favourite games: *Little Big Adventure*, *Warcraft*

Pet Name: Baldy (!)



SOUNDBITE

Nildram's highly successful screen grabbing system, *Screen Thief*, has recently been nominated for two awards – Ziff Davies Shareware award and Best Utility – at the Shareware Industry Conference. This is an excellent grabbing system that we at PC POWER use regularly and is available from Nildram Software – £19.95 + VAT for the Windows version and £29.95 + VAT for the DOS version. Contact Nildram on (01442) 891331 for more information, or alternatively e-mail them at sales@nildram.co.uk. You can also download test-drive versions by calling their BBS on (01442) 891109 or via the Internet at <http://www.nildram.co.uk>. Fingers crossed Nildram.

facility which allegedly eliminates the need for taking it apart and attacking it with a moistened cloth. The Pilot Mouse will be reviewed next issue and is available now for £20.

Logitech are also offering a free mobile phone with every one of their products sold this summer from selected outlets. This offer will run from 1 June to 31 October 1995 while stocks last. The promotion is available for the entire range of Logitech products including the MouseMan, TrackMan Voyager and ScanMan 256. For more information either wait for the reviews or call Logitech on (01344) 894300.



The Pilot Mouse. Presumably a good mate of the Toilet Duck.

A (NOVA) LOGICAL BUY FOR EA

Electronic Arts, one of the world's leading software developers and distributors have bought a minority stake in NovaLogic, the company behind the imminent *Werewolf Vs Comanche* and the patented Voxel Space technology that the game boasts. The deal was made on 10 May for an undisclosed sum, but it does mean that from now EA will be sole distributor for NovaLogic's products in the UK.



More deadly rotor-topped airborne hardware. Arg, and stuff.

John Garcia said of the move "We are delighted... EA understands the development and distribution of interactive entertainment software as well as anyone in the world and we are pleased to be associated with such fine brands as Bullfrog, Origin and EA Sports." This move adds considerably to EA's increasing dominance in the UK PC software market, indeed EA were nominated software company of the year at the recent Golden Joystick Awards in London.



Join the elite! Join the adventure! Join the hunt for an amazing variety of bugs!

CON OF THE CENTURY!

Gametek's *Frontier: First Encounters* was reviewed last issue where it achieved a respectable 84%, but mass complaints of bugged versions have swamped the PC POWER offices and blocked Internet forums country-wide. There are indeed plenty of bugs on certain versions of *First Encounters*, as we said in the review, and although Gametek have assured us that they have recalled all dodgy versions of the game, we have in fact heard that bugged games are being forced on retail with patch disks included in the packaging.

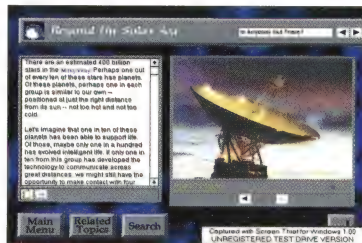
Basically, if you have any problems with your copy of the game, phone Gametek immediately and demand a patch disk or a replacement. Sending bugged versions of games out onto the streets is simply not good enough – it doesn't affect the mark we gave *First Encounters*, as our copy worked fine, but we would certainly have warned PC POWER readers of the problems if we had been aware. You can contact Gametek on (01753) 554340.

VOYAGE OF DISCOVERY

Little-known Astrion have just signed an exclusive deal to distribute the highly successful US-originated Discovery series of CD-ROMs. Taken from the Discovery channel, the first six titles are: *In the Company of Whales*, *Sharks! An Interactive Journey*, *Beyond Planet Earth*, *Normandy: The Great*



Yum yum yum. Chickens in a basket for my dinner.



See that? That's your satellite dish, that is.

Crusade, *Wings Over Europe* and *Professor Iris Fun Field Trip Safari*.

There is a full review of *Sharks!* on page 94 which is definitely the best of the bunch, although *Wings Over Europe* is also extremely well documented. These CDs are extremely useful as educational tools and Astrion would be wise to aim them at the schools market, especially with the recent boom in educational multimedia machines. All Discovery CDs retail for £39.99, with the exception of *Professor Iris* which is £29.99, and they are all out now. For more information on these products, contact Astrion on (0181) 202 0011 and tell them PC POWER sent you.

MORTAL KOMBAT III ON PC!

GT Interactive Software have just acquired the rights to release all of the games from Williams in the USA. Williams, who are long time developers of such classic coin-ops as *NBA Jam* and *Mortal Kombat I & II* have plans for a PC version of their up-and-coming console title, *MKIII*.

MKIII introduces eight new characters with the usual array of questionable special moves and they join



Blood! Gore! Innards! Decapitations! Nice bunches of flowers!

PC CHARTS

KEY: - No change NE New Entry (2) Last month's position

CD-ROM CHARTS

| | | | |
|----|------|--------------------------------|-------------|
| 1 | (2) | Discworld | Psygnosis |
| 2 | (3) | Dark Forces | Virgin |
| 3 | (1) | First Encounters | Gametek |
| 4 | (7) | TFX | Ocean |
| 5 | (6) | Dragon Lore | Mindscape |
| 6 | (10) | Bioforge | EA |
| 7 | (NE) | Psycho Pinball | Codemasters |
| 8 | (9) | Magic Carpet | Bullfrog |
| 9 | (NE) | Super Street Fighter II: Turbo | Gametek |
| 10 | (NE) | Wing Commander III | EA |

FULL-PRICE PC CHARTS

| | | | |
|----|------|-------------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1 | (-) | Sim City 2000 | Maxis |
| 2 | (3) | Overlord | Virgin |
| 3 | (2) | Frontier: First Encounters | Gametek |
| 4 | (5) | Discworld | Psygnosis |
| 5 | (4) | Premier Manager 3 | Gremlin |
| 6 | (7) | Doom II | Virgin |
| 7 | (8) | Microsoft Flight Sim 5.0 | Microsoft |
| 8 | (NE) | Fantasy Manager | Anco |
| 9 | (-) | TIE Fighter | Virgin/ LucasArts |
| 10 | (NE) | Mavis Beacon 2 | Mindscape |
| 11 | (-) | Rise of the Robots | Mirage/ Time Warner Int |
| 12 | (-) | The Lion King | Virgin |
| 13 | (NE) | Microsoft Golf 2 (Win) | Microsoft |
| 14 | (18) | All New World of Lemmings | Psygnosis |
| 15 | (10) | Theme Park | Bullfrog |
| 16 | (NE) | Aladdin | Virgin |
| 17 | (20) | Colonisation | Microprose |
| 18 | (13) | Transport Tycoon World Editor | Microprose |
| 19 | (15) | Rise of the Triad | US Gold |
| 20 | (NE) | Transport Tycoon | Microprose |

For budget charts, turn to page 101.



So it's a very large *Mortal Kombat III* logo. So sue us. (Don't encourage them – Ed)

game sequel veterans Lui Kang, Shang Tsung and Sub Zero to name but a few. As with *MKII*, the backgrounds will be digitised and the fights intense, but with the new game, Williams have added a third dimension, whereby players can be biffed into a new background, or slammed into the floor where a new

level awaits beneath.

Console versions of *MKIII* will be out on 13 October (Mortal Friday), but expect the PC version to follow on later. GT will also be releasing the official *Heretic* and *Ultimate Doom*. For more information contact Bastion on (0171) 4901323 or read the E3 report beginning on page 18.

Next month in PC POWER

Beats us!

Oh, what's the point? Nearly all of the predictions in last month's news proved to be exaggerated, but rest assured there definitely is a feature on EA Canada next month and a monster feature on the ultimate PC you can buy – money no object. Plus...

Ultimate Doom

PC POWER will be reviewing *Ultimate Doom* from GT next issue, which is the official version of the top selling shareware game that has extra levels and even more challenge. Is it the ultimate *Doom*, or just an outdated game that's missed the boat? We decide...

Picture perfect?

The MPEG scene exploded last Christmas with many different boards vying for your cash and proclaiming themselves as the greatest thing since the cathode-ray tube was invented. Now all the fuss has died down we look at six MPEG cards that have stood the test of time and all the films available to the MPEG card owner. We also ask the most important question of all – what's actually the point of owning an MPEG card for your PC when you can get a VHS video recorder which is better quality for less money?

Monster! (again)

Looking for the ultimate rush? We choose the world's best PC set-up and show you how to install it in your home. Money no object, performance is everything, nothing but the best. See what monster we create next issue.

Inside Apogee

It's big, it's futuristic and it just might be the best thing since *Doom II*, we get our hot sweaty mits on Apogee's latest and greatest shoot-'em-up as well as all their latest software projects including four, count 'em, four *Doom* clones and an exclusive look at their biggest project yet.

Modem mania

We test 12 of the hottest modems on the market and ask the important question – which is best for you? Speed, compatibility, ease of use, looks – we storm the comms scene and come away feeling all cyberpunk. Bottom line, if you're thinking of buying a modem and getting on-line, this is the definitive group test.

Beyond the Pentium

Next month we will be talking to Intel about the next generation of processor chips including the P6, which is set to be released this autumn and should increase performance of even Pentiums by four or five times. Can't wait...

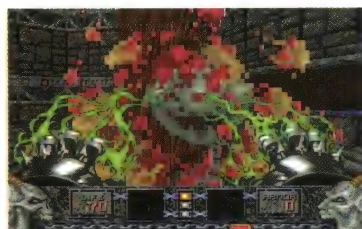
Plus (probably) *Duke Nukem 3-D*, *Daggerfall*, *Dungeon Master II*, *Striker '95*, *Command & Conquer*, *Dr Drago's Madcap Chase*, *Space Quest 6*, *Picture Perfect Golf*, *Last Dynasty*, *AirPower*, *Sensible Golf*, *Shellshock!*, *Screamer*, *Stonekeep*, *Fade to Black*, *Brett Hull Hockey*, *Crusader*, *Gender Wars*, *Cybermage*, *Baldies*, *Terminal Velocity*, *Theme Hospital*, *TFX 2*, *Micro Machines 2* and *Blade Runner* – not.

Can you possibly do without the next issue of PC POWER? Didn't think so...

PC POWER #20: ON SALE 13 JULY

GOODY GOODY YUM YUM!

Music Machine Marketing appear to have hit on a winner by offering over 500 games on one CD for under a tenner. The games, which are essentially just hundreds of shareware releases will save you the cost of downloading them from the Internet and include the classic *Doom*, *Heretic*, *Descent*, *Rise of the Triad*, *Raptor* and *Cannon Fodder* – in fact there are so many, we couldn't possibly print them all.

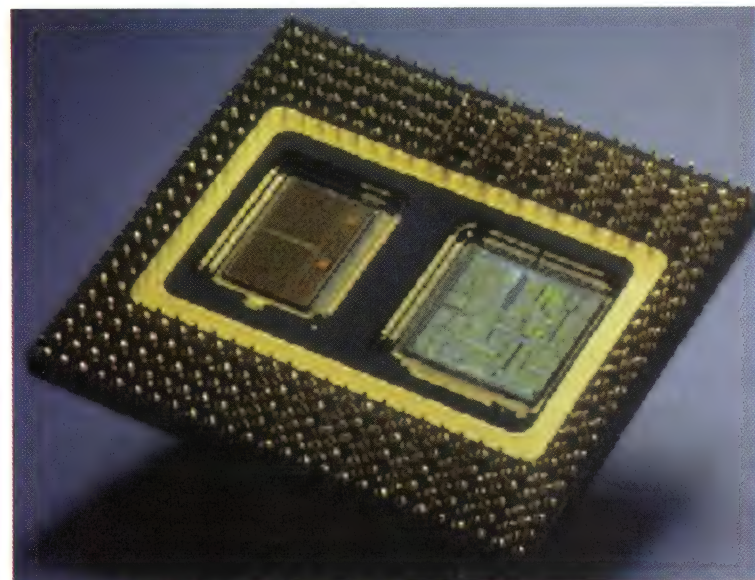


Two not-bad-at-all shareware games now on CD.

Remember that these games are shareware and therefore not complete, but the CD is definitely good value for money and there are even some gems like *Robotron* on there if you can find them, plus 300 *Doom* WADs and level editors. To order the Games & Goodies CD you can call the credit card hotline on (01204) 387410 or look out for their advert in PC POWER. We will review the CD

P6 OF THE BEST!

Rumours of Intel's latest processor, the P6, have abounded recently. So



The P6 – set to double the performance offered by the Pentium.

SOUNDBITE

A survey by Burnley-based Time Computer Systems has revealed that 70% of home computer sales are multimedia PCs and that figure is increasing all the time. The figures are based on the company's last 15,000 orders and that represents an increase in CD-ROM drives sales of more than 400% on last year! Time also announced that due to recent price drops in quad speed CD-ROM drives, they are becoming far more prominent than ever before. A series of high quality CD software releases are thought to have spearheaded this multimedia buying frenzy. Time manager Colin Silcock commented to PC POWER, "This time last year two in ten PCs sold were fitted with CD-ROM drives, now it's moving close to eight in ten!" Time can be contacted on (01282) 777111.

next issue, so you may want to check out the score before parting for the cash.

THOSE LUCKY FEW

The winner of the Gremlin Satellite system from issue 15 is Adrian Wilson of Kempston, and the five runners-up are Gerald Lewis from Barry, K Lewis from Poole, Melody Hewitson from Chorley, Paul Allen from Rochdale and finally D Williams from Congleton. The correct answers were B – The act of punishing or taking vengeance for wrong doing, sin or injury, A – The Krellan, B – 3 film channels. Congratulations and many thanks to all who entered.

The winner of the superb Texas Instruments 486 colour notebook competition in issue 16 is John O'Connor from Bury St Edmunds. Well done. The answer was that the notebook weighed 2.5kg.

far we've managed to get hold of full specifications and this picture of a prototype chip. Watch out for next month's in-depth guide to what the P6 is expected to achieve and how the Pentium-beater was designed.



E'S ARE GOOD

Damian Butt reports from the biggest computer expo ever staged, E3. A showcase for the greatest games your PC has ever seen, including *Wing Commander IV*, *Descent 2* and *Blade Runner* – live from the city of angels.

The Americans always have to go one better don't they? You go and host a perfectly decent sized computer show, then some egotistical Yank blows it out of all proportion.

It was just after the last CES show in Las Vegas that a significant rebel contingent of developers proclaimed Los Angeles as the next big showpiece. For a start, Las Vegas was getting a bit passé and the place was just so damned expensive. But the real reason was that the whole industry needed a complete shake-down; fresh enthusiasm; new surroundings – in short – a break.

Los Angeles is one of those cities that disorients you from the moment you get off the plane and into the taxi with a would-be De Niro as your driver. The whole city is a colourful tapestry of rich and poor. Black and white areas mingle so perfectly, it is impossible to find the line where you cross from affluent Beverly Hills into a Hispanic or Chinese conurb. All of a sudden, no-one speaks English and you can't understand the place names.

The Electronic Entertainment Expo (E3 – geddit) was held on 11-13 of May in the gargantuan LA Convention Centre, a place so large you could quite comfortably fit in three UKs and have room for a Malta if it really let its hair down. To give you an idea of the scale of this epic computer trade show – it takes your average game-laden journalist just over 15 minutes to cross from one end to the other, and that's with a map. The only thing the organisers forgot to include were chauffeur driven golf carts.

Inside this grand venue was packed the cream of the world's software developers, each indulging in the traditional "who's got the most elaborate and noisy stand?" competition. EA, Virgin, Time Warner Interactive, Acclaim, LucasArts, Interplay and Ocean, to name but a few, were all out in force, with Acclaim's huge *Batman Forever* (complete with the Batmobile!) and *Judge Dredd* stand beating even the stylish and understated Sony Playstation area which to be honest was not as impressive as everyone had hoped.

Many of the world's greatest games were unveiled at E3, with EA for example showing *Need for Speed* for the first time and Interplay heralding *Descent 2*. But even though this was undoubtedly the venue for the big sequels, it was good to see such a wealth of PC software and new innovation.

Virtual i-O had their i-glasses in full effect with Peter Gabriel, Fox Interactive entered the scene with *The X-Files* and *Die Hard Trilogy*, and Mindscape of course had *Aliens*, based on the comics by Dark Horse. Plus almost all software developers had multiple titles on offer – from September onwards – the PC games scene is going to explode!

But you want to know about the games of the future and it has to be said that this glimpse of software to come was the most fruitful since *Doom II* appeared and PCs suddenly became desirable games machines instead of staid business tools. Here's the definitive report.

Electronic Arts

Without a doubt Electronic Arts have now consolidated their position as producers of fine titles on the PC. Big news of the show was of course the start of filming for *Wing Commander IV*. In fact there was a party hosted on the set of the Confederation Ship Lexington, otherwise known as the Ren Mar studios in Hollywood.

The game will again feature Mark Hamill as Col Christopher Blair and both Malcolm McDowell and John Rhys-Davis also co-star – but will Ginger Allen reappear as the foxy mechanic? Written by *WCIII* scripters Terry Borst and Frank (famous brother) De Palma, the game follows the end of the Kilrathi war and the internal civil wars that begin to break out all over the Terran galaxy. You must decide how to save the Confederation or whether it is worth saving at all.

The main differences between *Wing Commander III* and the sequel is that the filmmakers have employed the use of moving camera shots in SVGA and you will have more control of events both out in space and back on the Lexington – it promises to be the ultimate interactive movie.

You will be able, for example, to take out whole wings of fighters and deploy them strategically in the heat of battle. *Wing Commander III*'s \$4 million budget will be significantly upped as the creators use more real sets rather than just greenscreen effects. Chris Roberts will remain in the director's chair. Expect the game to appear just after Christmas.

Nestling in their rock concert arena was *The Need for Speed*, which looked to play as well, if not better, than the stunning 3DO game. Although the graphics are more blocky and less well defined, it is a much faster game, quicker to load, and features new tracks, a horn for each car, and actual black tyre marks which are left on the tarmac when you spin the wheels! Sound is through Dolby surround

sound and *TNFS* is complemented with plenty of stills and video of the eight cars being put through their paces. And if you want to know how rich developers EA Canada really are, all the cars featured in this game are in fact those of the programmers. Jammy gets.

EA were also showing *Crusader: No Remorse*, which is a Super VGA isometric adventure in the style of *Shadowrun* and more recently *Little Big Adventure*. It's 200 years in the future and as a member of the tyrannical Economic Consortium which commits atrocities all over the world in the name of business (let me make you an offer you can't refuse), you become sickened by the violence and join the resistance. Obviously they have a better pension plan. *Crusader* is an entirely mis-



sion-based action game with one and a half hours of video, loads of weaponry and 16-bit digital sound. The business will be doing in September, if not sooner.

Fade to Black is our tip for the top as it combines the graphical splendour of the *Alone in the Dark* series with the instant playability and realistic animation of *Flashback*.

Programmed by French developers Delphine, *Fade to Black* was previously known as *Crossfire*, but the name was dropped for legal reasons (probably because it clashed with the ancient ball bearing attack game). In

keeping with the *Flashback* theme, Conrad B Hart is the hero once again in this full 3-D combat

The Need for Speed now has realistic black tyre marks left on the road when you skid, a horn for each car and new tracks. Volvo drivers need not apply.



1 *Fade to Black* is the best example yet of a truly 3-D shoot-'em-up from Delphine. 2 *Crusader* – "Knightlore with guns" 3 *Cybermage* struts its Doom-y stuff.



Actually, talking of *Bioforge*, with the open ending in the game as discovered by our very own Keith, and the high sales it achieved worldwide, we fully expect *Bioforge 2* to appear in the near future. Also, will EA convert the 3DO game *Prowler* to the PC? It certainly wouldn't be hard... you heard it here first.

Electronic Arts also had news of *FIFA '96*, *NHL Hockey* and *Psychic Detective*, which is a wild interactive movie (arrghh!) shot on location in San Francisco, with five hours of live footage and created by the coyly named Colossal Pictures. An unbelievable eye-fest is expected.

Still a way off – *The Darkening* (see news this issue).



Wing Commander IV – "Spear-heading the campaign to get facial hair back into fashion."

Virgin



1 Screamer – “Indycar meets Ridge Racer and introduces him to his mate Daytona.” **2** Heart of Darkness has already been seen in PC Power, but now we’ve actually played it, and it’s not too shabby. **3** Toonstruck from Virgin – “Great scott!”

Virgin have it all – great planes, great names and great games, but boy do they know it. The Branson-founded company had a peculiar slapped on newspaper decor that presumably was meant to tie in with their secret agent-style press packs; designed to emulate an FBI dossier.

We’ve all now seen the likes of *Dark Forces* and *Flight Unlimited*, but the big V had plenty more surprises up their sleeves. For a start, they announced the official licence of *Blade Runner*, the cult Harrison Ford movie directed by Ridley Scott which has recently had the ‘director’s cut’ treatment.

Quite why Virgin have announced this game now is a mystery as it isn’t due for release until August ‘96, but at least the potential for a stunning CD-ROM game is there, especially as Westwood Studios (*Dune II*, *Lion King*, *Lands of Lore II*) are converting the game.

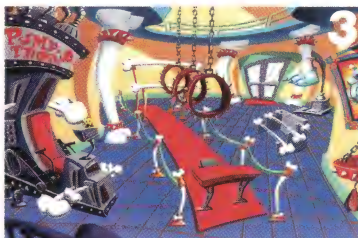
In conference, Virgin’s CEO, Martin Alper commented “Nearly every player in the industry raced to secure the licence to one of the most visually compelling films of our age.” What the

rush was and why it hasn’t been done before on the PC is a mystery. After all, CRL did a game nine years ago on the Spectrum and Commodore! No doubt we won’t have the exclusive demo, but you can still expect to see some serious coverage in PC POWER closer to the time.

But enough of this speculation – it is over a year away – Virgin also had an impressive *Ridge Racer* clone in the form of *Screamer*, which was fast, well detailed (if a little blocky) and had views such as dashboard and chase, but the Namco coin-op need not lose any sleep over the overall package. PCs still can’t cut it with the coin-op action games, presentation-wise anyway.

Heart of Darkness was back in the spotlight, with a Spielberg-esque mini-movie as the front end, but now the playability was exposed for a select few to play and it seemed to be just a platform game, albeit a very pretty one. The orchestral sound is really something though.

Command & Conquer, previewed last issue, was also shoving an Uzi where the sun doesn’t shine and attracting plenty of interest, especial-



ly from those who want to know whether Z from Time Warner Interactive is better or worse. Ironically, because Virgin are distributing Z in the States, both games where facing each other on the stand. Full review next issue, according to Virgin.

Those of you waiting for *11th Hour*, be prepared for bad news – Trilobyte have announced that the game has slipped yet again to September and so our review of the virtual horror movie will just have to wait – the words “hell” and “freeze over” spring to mind.

Virgin also had *Toonstruck* starring Christopher Lloyd. This is billed as the first game ever to let you control a live actor (hmm) and features Lloyd as an animator on a show called “Fluffy Fluffy Bun Bun” who suffers



from a mental block and during a deep sleep finds himself in Toonland. Totally original as you can see.

Toonstruck is packed with comical touches and voices from Lloyd, Dom De Luise and Tim Curry to name three. Expect it later this year.

Finally from Virgin/Papyrus is the long awaited *Indycar 2* – the sequel to one of the greatest and most accurate racing games of all time. *Indycar 2* has even better and more detailed graphics (especially the cars which are now resplendent with all the suspension and engine mechanics), 15 tracks based on the ‘95 season, realistic collisions, an SVGA mode, actual drivers and sponsors, and of course full digital sound effects and a multi-player game guaranteed to have PC owners migrating to each other’s houses at weekends. *Indycar 2* will be out at the latter end of this year and will be available for DOS, Windows 3.1 and Windows ‘95.

Still a way off – *NASCAR Track Pack*, *Agile Warrior F-111X*, *Lands of Lore 2*, *Monopoly*, *Converse Hardcore Hoops*, *Hyperball/Tilt*.



4 Indycar 2 has SVGA and more detail, but are the cockpits wide enough to fit our Nige? **5** Terranova – “Scary.”



This is not, I repeat not, an in-game shot.

A part from their deal with Shiny Entertainment to produce a Windows ‘95 version of *Earthworm Jim*, Activision had news of a Windows version of *Pitfall: The Mayan Adventure* which has just done the rounds on the Nintendo and Sega consoles.

MechWarrior 2 was the biggest game on the stand which was flanked by Activision and US Gold. Over two years in development, *MechWarrior 2* is your standard large robot causing vast devastation game and boasts much more detailed graphics and a neat virtual view that can be operated

Activision

on a Flightstick Pro’s weapons toggle, if you have one.

There are 50 battles to undertake, with a variety of mechs to control and plenty of dazzling explosions and impressive technical bits. A must, if you like that sort of thing, the game comes out in July.

Still a way off – *Paparazzi!*, *Earthworm Jim*, *Atari Action Pack Vol 2*



Earthworm Jim has sold over a million copies – now it’s the PC’s turn.



1 *Rebel Assault II* is more of the same, but with extra ships and an editor for the missions. This is an intro shot, by the way. **2** Plunging down to the planet's surface in your X-Wing, you suddenly realise you've left your bravery trousers at home. **3** *Mortimer* will be LucasArts' biggest kids game yet. **4** *The Dig* - "Spielberg."

No doubt all these products will be distributed through Virgin in the UK, but at E3, LucasArts were in a modest little covered room open only to those with lock picking skills. Inside there was *Rebel Assault II* - a bigger and better (graphically) game than *Rebel Assault*; featuring more ships to fly, tons of new stages including planet and super star

destroyer attacks, and even a game editor that lets you cus-



Mortimer - he's a giant flying snail. Quite.

tomise the difficulty levels. *Rebel Assault II* will be in the shops this winter.

Mortimer can only be described as LucasArts' magnum opus - a sizzling cartoon adventure for children aged 4-9 years old; that teaches them about preserving animals in the kingdom. The whole game is based around the fact that the evil Lodiuss has stolen a magical medallion from Professor Laslow (a do-gooder with a kind face and smile lines that would make Noel Edmonds look like a hatchet-faced baby killer no doubt!).

You control Sid and Nancy, sorry, Sally, and their huge and quite unbelievably cute giant snail, Mortimer as they attempt to unfreeze all the animals under Lodiuss' spell in only 24 hours!

Mortimer features unique 3-D flight

LucasArts



technology as you soar over the landscape - *Magic Carpet* style - and the game also contains video footage of animals, and problems for them to solve based on the environment. There's also an original soundtrack by a band bizarrely called Bungee Jumpin' Cows. *Mortimer* is due for an early '96 release.

Also from LucasArts is *The Dig* - a graphical adventure based on a

story by Steven Spielberg that contains over 200 locations and special effects by Industrial Light & Magic - another hit in the making? We shall see later this year, but the demo at the show was nothing short of amazing.

Still a way off - *Calia 2095*, *Indiana Jones' Desktop Adventures*, *Dark Forces 2* (well it's obvious).

Time Warner Interactive

Time Warner Inc is a big company. So big that they are in fact five smaller companies in one, with each acting independently. Warner Interactive Entertainment for example deals in the multimedia division of computer software, but Time Warner Interactive in the UK is specifically games-oriented.

Also in the pipeline from Time Warner Interactive is of course

Primal Rage, the PC conversion of the hit prehistoric beat-'em-up that has been doing the rounds in the arcades for ages. This looks to be the most accurate version yet, although there is a strong feeling here that beat-'em-ups on the PC are not exactly huge sellers and surely *Street Fighter II: Turbo* is enough for anyone. *Primal Rage* is out in November.

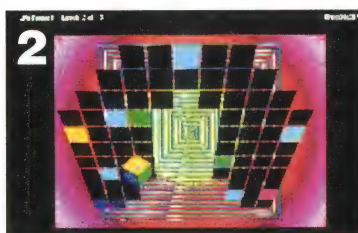


In our incredibly brief visit to Time Warner Interactive's stand, we also managed to see *Endorfun*, a puzzle game where you must roll blocks around a small maze and match up colours to complete each level, which is out in September.

Conqueror: AD1086, *Fast Attack* and *Wayne Gretzky* were all featured in issue 17 and are in order, a medieval adventure, sub sim and ice hockey game and are out in July, August and October respectively.

Also from TWI is *T-Mek* which as the name suggests is a *MechWarrior* type big robots game arriving in October. Finally, the good news is that the terrific two player shoot-'em-up, *Return Fire*, will make its PC debut in November. This is basically an overhead strategy/blasting game where the object is to get your opponent's flag in split screen mode. At your disposal you have different mili-

1 *Primal Rage* - "Beat-'em-ups are not big sellers." Apart from *Mortal Kombat*. **2** *Endorfun* is a simple puzzle game (except none of them are 'simple', are they?). **3** *Conqueror* from TWI - "September."



tary vehicles such as the jeep (very fast but not armoured), tank (slow but 'ard) and the assault helicopter which actually plays *Ride of the Valkyries* as you swoop down over the target.

A great game, let's hope it's a worthy conversion. *Striker '95* was not at the show incidentally because it is not being released in the US, but expect to see it next issue.

Still a way off - *Atmosfear*, *The Harbingers*, *Conqueror: AD1086*, *Fast Attack*, *Return Fire*.



Firmly entrenched in the centre of the south hall was Interplay's modest little stand; containing a full version of *Virtual Pool*, *Dungeon Master II*, at last something decent from *Stonekeep*, *Kingdom – The Far Reaches*, *Frankenstein Through the Eyes of the Monster* and of course the big news (not quite earth-shattering though) that Interplay have bought Shiny Entertainment, creators of *Earthworm Jim*, for a reputed \$7 million. There is a *Dungeon Master II* demo on this month's coverdisks and all indications point to the game coming out soon, with all other titles arriving in the next couple of months.

Interplay were also harping on about their game of the cartoon sensation, *Casper*, of the friendly ghost

variety. This will be their big Christmas game, but of course you can't rule out the film conversion of Kevin Costner's *Waterworld* which has reputedly cost over \$180 million to make (the film, not the game).

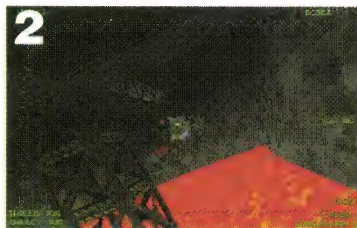
The basic premise is that the polar ice caps have melted, leaving mankind in cold water and pirates once again rule the waves. You play the enforcer who must clean up the planet and the game promises to include tons of slick rendered scenes and 11 action sequences (only 11?!). Incidentally, to make a profit, the film will have to take over \$500 million at the box office! More info soon.

Still a way off – *Descent 2*, *Netrunner*, *Conquest of a New World*, *Zombie Dinos from Planet Zeltoid*.



1

Interplay



2



3



4

1 Interplay's *Waterworld* – "Slick rendered scenes." Let's hope the game doesn't cost as much as the film. **2 & 4** These are the first shots of *Descent 2*, the sequel to one of the sleeper hits of the year. If it ain't broke, don't fix it. **3** At last *Stonekeep* is nearly here, this flaming dragon shot has been used to death, but the game was playing at E3. **5** *Dungeon Master II* – "Out soon."



5

Ocean were showing their hottest new game, *TFX: EF2000*, which is the sequel to the highly successful *TFX*. Programmed in the UK by Digital Image Design (DID) who also produced *F-29* and *Epic* for Ocean, *TFX2* adds the next generation of polygon mapped 3-D graphics to the smooth flight engine. The game also features eight way network play and was created with the co-operation of British Aerospace who, according to Ocean, supplied detailed de-classified information on the new Eurofighter on which the game is based. *TFX2* requires 8Mb of RAM to run due to the enhanced look and stunning intro sequences and it should be out in October.

Although Ocean's stand was small, they do have a great number of

Ocean

games for the rest of the year; sadly, most of them weren't at the show.

Still a way off – *Iron Angel* (still!), *Offensive*, *Sea Legends*, *Blades of Rage* (not an ice hockey sim), *Deathrace*, *Lobo*.



TFX:EF2000 is the sequel to the popular flight sim, *TFX*. Programmed by DID it should be here by October. Yipeeee!



News Multimedia

At the News Multimedia stand the only game of note was the horrendously late licence of *Hellraiser: Virtual Hell*. The demo was sensational; fully capturing the menace and horror of the first film (both sequels are crap) and there's certainly plenty of potential, but no firm news or release dates yet.

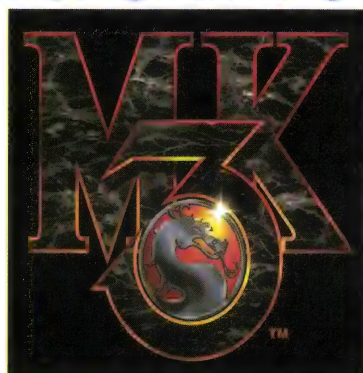
Still a way off – *Monster Island*, *Makers of the 20th Century*, *Enigma: Secrets of Bletchley Park*

GT Interactive

With their exclusive publishing deal with Williams, GT will soon be crashing onto your PC with plenty of top notch coin-op style games including the official full version of *Heretic*, *Ultimate Doom* and of course *Mortal Kombat III*. The latter is of course bigger and better than anything else – blah, blah, blah – and has more characters and definitely the most gruesome death moves ever seen on a computer screen. Expect them soon, especially *Ultimate Doom* which should be with us next issue.

Still a way off – *Vampire Masquerade*, *Mortal Kombat III*, *Ultimate Ultimate Mortal Kombat 7* (joke, you fool).

MKIII is definitely on for a PC release judging by the excellent sales of *MKII* and GT will be the lucky beggars.



Fox Interactive



The newly formed software side of the multi million dollar home entertainment company had plenty to turn heads on their wide open stand which shared space with the News Multimedia, a subsidiary of Murdoch's News International.

Fox had nothing concrete on show, only licences such as *The X-Files*, *Die Hard Trilogy*, *The Simpsons: Virtual Springfield*, and *Planet of the Apes* – they have the

names but where are the games? A spokesperson for Fox explained that *The X-Files* "... will be a multimedia experience that will put you in the shoes of FBI agents Mulder and Scully as you attempt to join the sci-fi series and solve mysteries from around the world."

Die Hard Trilogy is said to be a 3-D adventure that spans the three films, but there are no firm details other than it may use the *Doom* first person perspective engine. And finally, *Planet of the Apes* is said to be an accurate conversion of the most successful sci-fi film series of all time – actually one decent film with Charlton Heston and four trashy sequels. Facts, facts.

Still a way off – All their games really.

As reported last issue, the games being shown by SCI were *Kingdom O' Magic*, *XS* and *Gender Wars*, as well as a press preview of the *Lawnmower Man 2* film starring Matt Frewer. All games were well developed, although no-one could play any of them, with *Gender Wars* and *Kingdom* tying for first place in the 'want to see more' stakes.

SCI also boasted of the fact that they had secured the catchy tune

SCI

from the current Guinness advert by Prezpardo for *Kingdom O' Magic* and it was happily blaring out on the speakers. All SCI games are due out in late '95.

Still a way off – *Gender Wars*, *XS*, *Lawnmower Man 2: Jobe's War*.



An American footballing goblin prepares to void his bowels.



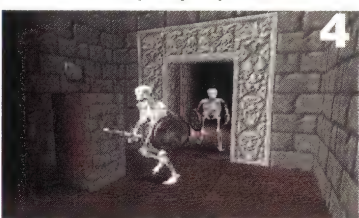
Smokers' corner, just outside the Paragon offices.

Bullfrog

With a string of successes under their belt, Bullfrog were busy looking forward with hit sequels and intriguing new concepts. *High Octane*, their latest racer, will be in next issue.



1 *Theme Hospital* is the quirky sequel to *Theme Park*, surprisingly. **2** *Magic Carpet 2* is on the way this winter. **3** As is *Syndicate 2*. **4** *Dungeon Keep* is all new and looks pretty impressive.



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Gametek

The creators of *First Encounters* and *Hell* were exhibiting modestly in the west hall, promoting their cutesy overhead people management game, *Baldies*. In keeping with the theme of the game, Gametek had also hired some midgets in large yellow foam heads to wander around bashing into things (they couldn't see through the eye holes y'see).

Baldies basically lets you command an entire race of hairless individuals as they struggle to become self-aware and develop new technology – presumably a wig that stays on and doesn't look like a dead beaver! The graphics are impressive and are similar to *Lemmings*, but the real treat is that the CD version has over an hour of *Creature Comforts*-

style animation of the Baldies at work. Full review soon.

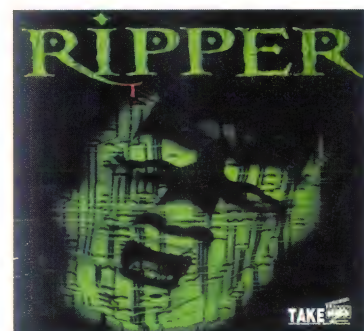
Millenia is a supreme intergalactic strategy adventure where you must save four species of aliens from the deadly Microids, who legend has it, will kill all the others off by the year 10,000. You must flit between planets in the Echelon and help each of the Entomons, Reptilians, Bearoids and Piscines to develop and defend themselves. Sounds promising, but there wasn't much on show unfortunately.

And the same can be said for *Cyberbykes* and *Quarantine 2*, which were both still in heavy production and not at the show. A shame really, as *Quarantine 2* promises a first person SVGA shoot-'em-up with even more carnage than the first game.

But the big news from Take 2,

Gametek's US developers who produced *Hell*, is *Ripper*, a futuristic manhunt based on Jack the Ripper's return in 2060. The police as usual are baffled, but you, as Jake Quinlan, must crack the case. Like *Hell* (let's hope not), *Ripper* features a first person perspective view of New York (Jack has emigrated in his old age has he?) and excellent FMV of the murders themselves. *Ripper* features the music of Blue Oyster Cult, cost \$2.5 million to make and also includes a star-studded Hollywood cast including Burgess Meredith, Karen Allen, John Rhys-Davies and Tahnee Welch (daughter of Raquel). *Ripper* will be out at the end of the year, with other titles arriving from September onwards. No pics unfortunately as the X-ray machine at the airport wiped the disks.

Still a way off – **Maximum Roadkill, Compelling Adventure of A Gent, Escalation, The War College, Abduction, Mercenary.**



Ripper from Gametek will actually feature a severed ear free with the game, or perhaps a knife in the back for all those angry *First Encounters* owners.

In amongst the dross in the Philips Media stand was a highly visual *Dead End*, which is a *Doom* clone, but at least it has some original ideas. In addition, Philips will also be releasing the attractively titled *Demon Driver*, *Alien Ally* and *New Day* – all out in '96.

Philips also had news of 75 new movie titles they will be bringing out on VideoCD in the second half of this year. Films include *The Untouchables*, *Bill and Ted's Bogus Journey*, *Fatal Attraction*, *Beverly Hills Cop 2*, *Witness* and *Chinatown*.

21st Century are known for their pinball games but now they're set to release a graphical adventure called *Synnergist*. As roving reporter Tim Machin, you must interact with an entire city full of people in the year 2010 to find the killer of a friend, and track down the source of the dark visions that have begun to haunt

you. *Synnergist* will be out in September, but there will be a full look next issue.

Also from 21st Century are even more pinball games – just when you thought it was safe! Beginning in July they will be releasing *Pinball Mania* for Windows and *Pinball Illusions* and *Pinball World* in September. How long before *Pinball Hallucinogens*? Aren't you overdoing the pinball motif guys?

Infogrames, creators of *Alone in the Dark*, had James Coburn – he of the flinty persona – on their stand for a limited time. Weary journos and sparkling PR reps could actually shake the hand of the man who made a comeback in Bruce Willis' *Hudson Hawk*. Coburn was announced as playing CEO Owen Barnes in Infogrames' *AIV Network\$* coming out this summer.

Also showing from the French company was *Prisoner of Ice* (see the review on page 52) and another *Alone in the Dark* style game called *Knight's Chase*. Infogrames have improved on their previous graphics engine, with even more surface detail on the characters and surroundings. You play Williams Tibbs, who is the reincarnation of a knight whose fiancée was abducted in the past and through the use of a nifty magic glove, you can travel back and save her. Of course, all this time travelling

The Others

means you must also fight your feared enemy – Wolfram. Scary. *Knight's Chase* will be here later this year but the brief glimpse at the show was enough to confirm that it will be just as good as *Alone in the Dark 3*, and that's no bad thing.

Velocity are producing *Spectre VR* and *Jetski Rage*. *Spectre* we showed you last issue, but *Jetski Rage* is an entirely unknown product over here. Coming across as a kind of *Outrun* on water, the game is a full 3-D 360° race where anything goes and the object is simply to cross the line first. Graphically the game looks superb, however the demo version played at E3 looked absolutely nothing like the press shots, so one can only assume that they were specially prepared. The game will be out in the winter from US Gold.

Bethesda, another developer for US Gold, were hotly touting their impressive looking *Terminator Future Shock* – a *Doom* clone game with highly faithful graphics that capture the mood of the films. Great intro sequence too. *Daggerfall* is the sequel to the *Elder Scrolls* and is a huge adventure game that will enthral fans of the genre for months to come and PC Power has the demo for you soon – you lucky people. Also from Bethesda is *X-Car*, but the demo for the game simply refused to work. Car looked nice though...

Lastly for US Gold was *TekWar* by Intra Corp Inc, a *Doom* clone book adaptation of William Shatner's truly awful sci-fi series. You must take out the eight drug barons who have ruthlessly hooked everyone on the Internet with their special VR lifestyle program – now they must pay. Looks

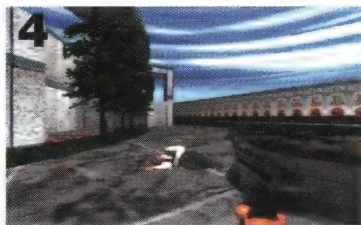
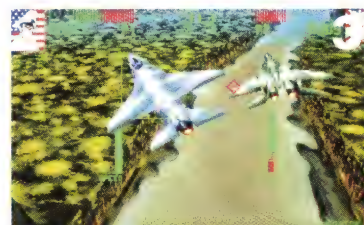
good, but don't expect an earth-shatteringly original game.

The most interesting game arriving from Warner Active stand (yet another subsidiary of Time Warner Inc) if only because it stars ex-Baywatch babe, Erika Eleniak (who also appeared as a plank in *Under Siege*), is *Panic in the Park*. This is an interactive adventure set in a huge theme park due to be demolished if the missing deeds are not found. You are a reporter assigned to find the deed on behalf of one of the twin owners of the park; the evil twin is the one with the bulldozers at the ready. The game will hit the streets in late August/September but we've already got Erika's autograph – ha!

As you've no doubt read in the news section, JVC are now releasing software for the PC, the first titles being *Deadly Skies* – a flight sim/beat-'em-up (yes, a beat-'em-up) which is similar in concept to Sega's *Airwar* – and *AH3 Thunderstrike Air Assault*. The latter is basically a helicopter shoot-'em-up that looks promising, if not at all original. More news soon.



Her off Baywatch and a man in a hat.



1 *Terminator Future Shock* from Bethesda was great to look at and faithful to the films, but isn't the world sick of *Doom* clones? **2** *X-Car* racing didn't actually work. **3** *Deadly Skies* from JVC. **4** *TekWar* – "Earth-shatteringly original."

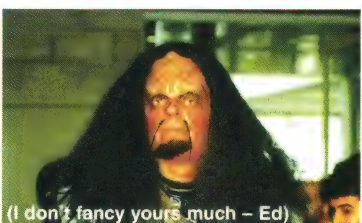
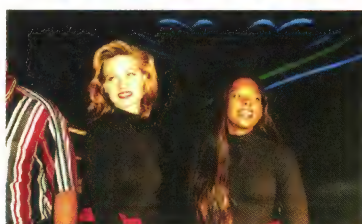
E3

The PC POWER at-a-glance guide to all the PC games shown at E3!

11th Thunder – Virgin – 3rd Quar '95
 AH3 Thunderstrike Air Assault – JVC – 3rd Quar '95
 AIV Network\$ – Infogrames – 2nd Quar '95
 Baldies – Gametek – 3rd Quar '95
 Blade Runner – Virgin – 3rd Quar '95
 Casper – Interplay – Xmas '95
 Command & Conquer – Virgin – 2nd Quar '95
 Conqueror: AD1086 – Time Warner Int – 2nd Quar '95
 Crusader – EA – 3rd Quar '95
 Cyberbykes – Gametek – 3rd Quar '95
 Cybermage – EA – 3rd Quar '95
 Daggerfall – US Gold – 3rd Quar '95
 Dead End – Philips – 1st Quar '96
 Deadly Skies – JVC – 3rd Quar
 Demon Driver – Philips – 1st Quar '96
 Die Hard Trilogy – Fox – 1st Quar '96
 Dig, The – LucasArts – 4th Quar '95
 Dungeon Master II – Interplay – 2nd Quar '95
 Earthworm Jim – Activision – 4th Quar '95
 Fade to Black – EA – 3rd Quar '95
 Fast Attack – Time Warner Int – 3rd Quar '95
 FIFA '96 – EA – 4th Quar '95
 Gender Wars – SCI – 3rd Quar '95
 Harbengers, The – Time Warner Int – 3rd Quar '95
 Heart of Darkness – Virgin – 4th Quar '95
 Heretic – GT – 2nd Quar '95
 Indycar 2 – Virgin – 4th Quar '95
 Jetski Rage – US Gold – 3rd Quar '95
 Kingdom O' Magic – 3rd Quar '95
 Knight's Chase – Infogrames – 4th Quar '95
 Lands of Lore II – Virgin – 3rd Quar '95

MechWarrior 2 – Activision – 2nd Quar '95
 Millenia – Gametek – 3rd Quar '95
 Mortal Kombat III – GT – 4th Quar '95
 Mortimer – LucasArts – 1st Quar '96
 Need for Speed, The – EA – 4th Quar '95
 NHL Hockey – EA – 3rd Quar '95
 Panic in the Park – Warner Active – 3rd Quar '95
 Paparazzi! – Activision – 3rd Quar '95
 Pinball Mania – 21st Century – 3rd Quar '95
 Pinball World – 21st Century – 3rd Quar '95
 Primal Rage – Time Warner Int – 4th Quar '95
 Quarantine 2 – Gametek – 4th Quar '95
 Rebel Assault II – LucasArts – 4th Quar '95
 Return Fire – Time Warner Int – 4th Quar '95
 Ripper – Gametek – 4th Quar '95
 Screamer – Virgin – 3rd Quar '95
 Spectre VR – US Gold – 3rd Quar '95
 Stonekeep – Interplay – 4th Quar '95
 Striker '95 – Time Warner Int – 2nd Quar '95
 Synnergist – 21st Century – 3rd Quar '95
 T-Mek – Time Warner Int – 4th Quar '95
 TekWar – US Gold – 4th Quar '95
 Terminator: Future Shock – US Gold – 3rd Quar '95
 TFX2 – Ocean – 3rd Quar '95
 Toonstruck – Virgin – 3rd Quar '95
 Ultimate Doom – GT – 2nd Quar '95
 Waterworld – Interplay – 1st Quar '96
 Wayne Gretzky – Time Warner Int – 3rd Quar '95
 Wing Commander IV – EA – 1st Quar '96
 X-Car – US Gold – 4th Quar '95
 X-Files, The – Fox Int – 1st Quar '96
 XS – SCI – 3rd Quar '95

HELLO GIRLS!



(I don't fancy yours much – Ed)

And that's about it. Obviously there are bound to be loads of games that frustrated software companies wanted us to know about, but it if ain't here, then you simply didn't shout loud enough. Apologies in advance, please rectify the situation by sending us the relevant games so that we can cover them. And the best game of the show? Well, for me it was a toss up between *Fade to Black*, *Need for Speed* and *Screamer*.

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The Word

Yet more letters from the noble PC POWER readers. Please send all your views and comments on the magazine and life in general to *The Word, PC POWER, Paragon House, St Peter's Road, Bournemouth BH1 2JS*. All letters are read and we reserve the right to edit and publish unless stated otherwise. Letter of the month receives our latest game of the month.

E'S ARE GOOD

Dear PC POWER,
You asked for comments, so here goes.

While reading The Word of the May issue, I saw the letter from Dom Robinson of Hull regarding the adverts for CD-ROMs etc containing sexual images. I looked through the magazine and found another such ad with the headline "Interactive Adult Excitement"

Artistically, this ad has no merit whatsoever. As an ad it does get its message across I suppose. As to the content, why would anyone care? The subject of sex seems to be so hotly debated by people who think it is degrading to even mention it that I wonder if the problem is not with the adverts, but the protestors?

The company sells a product. If you don't like the product, don't buy it. If you don't like the ads, don't read them. If you feel it necessary to ban these ads for the "moral health" of others, I demand a recount of the vote that elected you God.

These ads are a lot less shocking than the scenes of starvation and hunger in other parts of the world, or the damage done by so-called freedom fighters who blow up everything "for the cause." (Calm down – Ed)

If people start worrying about their genitalia and start concerning themselves with the state of the environment we may find that there will be no need to worry about anything as we won't survive!

In answer to The Butt Stops Here, regarding violence in games – any game has as a central element of competition, ie the idea is to win. Football is very violent. Anything can be violent, but it is how that violence is perceived by the audience that is important.

Up until today the technology for computer games was not capable of photo-realistic violence, therefore it never seemed real to any well-adjusted person. With FMV and movies on the CD we need a rethink. I do not believe that any sane person will go out and maim or torture just

because a computer game does it, but I do think that some form of control of access for the more impressionable (ie younger) may not be a bad idea – I just don't know how it would work.

At the same time, restricting adults access smacks of censorship and that is something we should all strive to avoid. To my knowledge there is no conclusive evidence that violence in video games affects players.

Finally, really I am shocked! I thought I would write these comments and fire them off via e-mail during my regular mail section. I searched the mag from front to back, but all I could find was a snail mail address and the nearest thing to hi-tech was a fax number. Shame on you guys! Absolutely no street cred at all! How can you be "happening, in-touch and serious about computers" without an e-mail address? Guys, guys, guys!

Shane Kelly, Scotland

Some interesting points, Shane, but I think you are getting confused with the issue at hand. The debate thus far concerning the dodgy ads in PC POWER has been whether or not we should include them because they degrade the rest of the contents of the maga-

ine, not whether they are pornographic or not.

In actual fact the ads themselves are not even vaguely pornographic; just suggestive – a high-wire act of Benny Hill-type stories and painfully bad clichés. These guys can't even write properly; let alone spell their adverts.

As I have said before, I do not approve of the adverts as they seem to be easy money; anyone could get them if they didn't mind the social stigma – I do, advertising don't, because it pays. The stock black and white reminds me of the leaflets you get thrust into your hands at every corner in Las Vegas, and they are certainly not welcome in a full colour and professional PC publication. Comments please, and I'd also be very interested in hearing from anyone who has actually bought the CD-ROMs in question. Names and addresses will be held in the strictest confidence.

Ahem, yes, sorry about the e-mail cock-up, Shane. We do in fact have one, it's just that we, er forgot to put it in. The e-mail address for PC POWER is 744 21.1155@compuserve.com.

MORE DARK DEMOS

Dear Sir,

I am a regular reader of PC POWER (CD edition) and believe it is the best publication of its sort on the news-stands today. However I was very disappointed with your April issue. The front cover of the latest issue advertises that the coverdisks include a demo of *Dark Forces*. Eagerly awaiting this chance to sample the long awaited game I bought the magazine with more than the usual expectations of what was in store this month.

Only to return home and find that the CD did not include the game that was advertised. There was a small sticker on the packaging of one of the disks informing me that the *Dark Forces* demo would not run and that

this program would be included next month.

I was to say the least, disappointed with the fact that the demo would not run, but I was even more annoyed by the way that you informed the reader. The notification sticker which apologised for the production error was placed on the CDs in such a way that the purchaser could not read it until after they had bought the magazine.

The newsgroup, understandably, would not exchange the magazine, as it was not their fault that the CD would not run all of the programs on it. Surely the magazine was sold under false pretences and I have to question the validity of the notification with the advertising on the magazine. I would appreciate your immediate attention in this matter.

Mr PA Bicknell, Crewe

Unfortunately, Mr Bicknell, you are the victim of the phantom adhesive machine which stalks the moors late at night and places the labels for magazines in the wrong place. Many many apologies, but it is simply not our fault. At least we made the effort of notifying our readers which was something no-one else bothered to do. And I kinda hoped you'd want the magazine for what it is and not just because of the demo. The working version incidentally was on the May issue.

NIGEL NO-HUMOUR

Dear PC POWER,
How dare you mark down a game based solely on the fact that Tia Carrere "doesn't get her kit off." I am referring of course to the *Daedalus Encounter* review in the May issue, written by Steve Hill. I obviously don't know as much about reviewing as you lot do but this seems an idiotic criteria and I am surprised that you let it in.

Oh grow up and get yourself a girlfriend! Haven't you ever heard

[illegible]

Tacky, n'est-ce pas? Must be why it's here again.



This isn't a gratuitous picture of Tia Carrera at all. Really.

of irony, or a sense of humour even? Steve had already marked *Daedalus Encounter* before he wrote the comment in the ratings box and he was only expressing the disappointment that everyone else will feel when they play the game. The game was *not* marked

down for the lack (or lack of the lack) of Tia's clothes.

POWER CORRUPTS

Dear Word,
I read with considerable interest Dave Westley's editorial about processing power. This article stated that not even your P90 (Pentium processor clocked at 90MHz, good-bye central heating) could provide the performance required to compete with the "super console." A possible explanation offered is the fact that the Pentium, indeed all 80x86 processors are CISC (Complex Instruction Set) and that it might be better to adopt a RISC (Reduced Instruction Set) processor.

I will not go into great detail about the differences between CISC and RISC processors, suffice to say that theoretically a RISC processor clocked at the same speed as a CISC will run faster due to its more economical use of clock speeds.

However, it really does not matter whether a RISC or a CISC processor is used in a PC. The result will be the same.

The problem with processors is that they have outgrown the original architecture designed way back at the start of the Eighties by IBM and Microsoft in the form of DOS. In those days no-one thought users would require more than 1Mb of memory or would need anything more than a simple textual display.

Hence the use of the 8086 processor with its ability to address 1Mb of memory and the design of DOS to be limited to this address space. As you mention the PC and its associated hardware has evolved over the last 15 years, but DOS has almost stood still.

Processors of today can address Gigabytes of memory (in fact Tbytes and Terabytes in some cases) and most people would like high resolution colour graphics displays. Take

your example of *US Navy Fighters*. In its highest resolution this will require 768 Kbytes of memory on the graphics card to handle this display. However, DOS insists that only 64 Kbytes of that memory can be mapped into DOS space at any one time. This means 12 banks of video memory will need paging into this space to update a full screen. This means wasted time.

From the 80386 upwards, the processor had the ability to run in a flat memory model. In other words, the processor treated its address space as a single contiguous block of memory. In theory this means that the video memory could be mapped into this address space in its entirety. This would mean suitably designed cards are needed and DOS would have to go in its current form.

Couple this with custom graphics chips and fast data buses such as PCI or VL all running at the same speed as the processor and you will

Letter of the Month

Dear Word,
I have just bought issue 17 of PC POWER and I would like to respond to a number of topics contained in the letters section.

First, in response to Damien Hobbs' letter about mail order companies advertising in PC Power. Why not set up a scheme where companies who are well known to yourselves and are reliable and large enough not to go bankrupt are given a PC POWER Recommended badge on their ads? This way people will know what companies you feel are the best around. This scheme would give people like Damien reassurance that their hard earned money doesn't got to waste.

I have had many bad experiences where companies have messed me about or gone into receivership, but now I have a wide enough knowledge or huge back-log of magazines to compare details with.

As for Dom Robinson's letter about the adult orientated adverts – what's wrong with them? OK, so I'll never need to buy anything from them, but there are bound to be a number of people buying things who are seeing advertisements in PC POWER otherwise they would have stopped with you before now.

People should have a choice of what to buy, without 'do-gooders' like Dom butting in. Are you sure his name isn't Mary Whitehouse? I'm sure he doesn't close his eyes when nudity is shown at the cinema or on TV.

Sex sells videos, TV magazines, CD-ROMs – you name it. People want sex, but you don't hear people in magazines such as *Empire* whinging about films that may be advertised in their magazine which

have an adult content. Just look at films like *Basic Instinct* – shag-athon or what!? But it sold...

Years ago in the days of the C64, Spectrum, Amstrad CPC and even the Amiga and Atari ST, magazines would give away programs on their coverdisks and tapes which were old and software companies couldn't sell any more. But now on the PC, the only full versions of programs are old application software which is given away because it's outdated. But why not software?

It would be good for magazines because they would sell more copies, good for readers because they could increase their software library, and the software companies could insert adverts into the games to advertise their latest games.

Well, that's all for now. I've got most things off my chest, other than the little point about people whinging about the lack of a multi-player option in *Dark Forces*. So what! It's a great game, better than *Doom II* in single player mode. LucasArts said from the beginning that *Dark Forces* would be a single player game because of the storyline. Perhaps they'll give you something to smile about by bringing out a follow-up which would include a multi-player mode and perhaps even a light sabre.

Richard Ruane, Gwent

A star letter if ever I heard one, Richard. The advertising idea is an interesting one and I will be taking it up with the curvaceous babes in ads as soon as possible. As far as I can see there is only one draw-back – we would have to turn away plenty of well-meaning advertisers as well as poten-

tial dodgy ones. How could you get a PC POWER Platinum award if you weren't allowed to appear in the magazine and gain our confidence? Chicken and the egg situation.

There is no reason why the scheme could not be implemented for long term clients and indeed this might encourage them to say with us longer in the knowledge that we recommend them to their target audience. Letters from advertisers and readers please.

Of course you're right about the attitude of sex amongst PC owners and people in general, Richard. I take it from your tone that you don't mind the adverts and that is commendable, but personally I cringe every time someone I know flicks through the mag and then stops at the offending pages with a wry smile. I just feel like one of the soggy hanky brigade.

Films are an entirely different matter and sex scenes are commonplace as a way of either conveying the story or trying to sell the video using tantalising tenth of a second snippets. *Empire* is the best film magazine going and they regularly have "spot the willy or tits" features focusing on the saucy side of cinema – why? Because they know their readers are all closet pervs at heart. I'm surprised no-one has written a reference book devoted to recommending movies based on their sex scenes. It can only be around the corner believe me (and I'd like a copy if it is a PC Power reader).

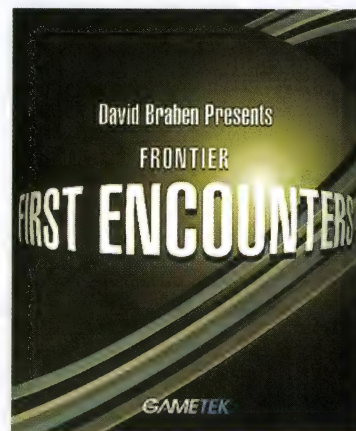
In the world of PC CD-ROM, even games like *Voyeur* are like *Carry On* films compared to the sauce you can get from your average thriller these days. In terms of

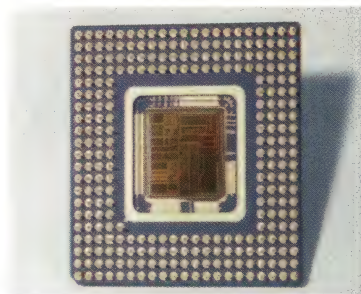
adult content, games have always gone for blood and gore rather than sexual stimulation, which is probably just as well or many games would never have seen the light of day through censorship.

The reason why free games, even old ones, are not featured on the cover of PC magazines is that this trade was stopped by ELSPA because it practically killed off the Spectrum and Commodore software sales. If a magazine wants to get pulled off the shelves, this is the perfect way to do it, sadly. Personally I'd love to give away full old games, but there you go, my hands are tied...

The *Dark Forces* idea sounds good in theory, but I doubt they will go to the trouble, and they certainly shouldn't expect people to pay twice for the same game, light sabre or not.

For your top views, Richard, I am awarding you letter of the month, which means you get your letter boxed out in a different colour and our game of the month, which is *First Encounters*. If you already have the game, get in touch straight away. Well done.





Keep this chip away from Andy – he'll drown it in ketchup and eat it. Probably.

find that these so called "super consoles" will have a worthy competitor.

Take a Pentium processor (well one that can divide and conquer at least) or any of today's processors and design a PC around it from the ground up and you will then begin to realise the true power of processors be they CISC or RISC, and how little we push them in the systems we have today, even processors that have had their so called day, such as the 80836.

The one thing the consoles should have taught the PC market by now is that it's not a matter of the processor power or MHz that matter, it's the architecture that really matters. However, try telling that to Intel and the like...

Neil D Brown, St Albans

But does that mean Cantona's staying at Man United, Neil? Let's get our priorities straight. Seriously though, I'm sick of tech-no-freaks blabbing on about how the PC can't hope to keep up with the Sony PlayStation or the Sega Saturn. As you say, it's all about organising your internal architecture.

The only reason the new consoles appear better on paper is because they are designed specifically to achieve those figures. All the new machines seem to care about is how many colours or polygons they can generate and move around the screen. At the end of the day we still want good games, not just exercises in higher mathematics! Letters please.

BRIEF ENCOUNTER

Dear PC POWER, I have just read your review of *Frontier: First Encounters* and I am in two minds as to whether or not I should buy the game, can you help? I already have *Frontier* and I was incredibly disappointed with it because to me *Elite* was the greatest game ever. Like your review said, I had higher expectations than most and the childish visuals of *Frontier* turned me off instantly.

What is *First Encounters* really like, as I'm sure the exclusive demo might have swayed your mark somewhat. I have read all the other magazines and most seem to agree with you (ie no marks over 90%). Also, I have heard that there is a problem with the sound settings on the game

and you need to get a special patch disk from Gametek to get it to work properly. Is this true?

Helen Garrett, Wakefield

Yes it is. Gametek had a slight problem with a batch of *First Encounters* and that means the sound doesn't work and crashes the game regularly. Since writing the review I got hold of a copy of the finished article from GAME (could we ever live without them?) and it was without fault, technically speaking.

If you have a bugged version of the game, it's a good idea to give Gametek a call on (01753) 553340 and get the patch disks.

As for the game itself, well if you hated *Frontier* then *First Encounters* isn't going to be the breath of fresh air you are searching for. It's much the same, but slightly improved. I never got into *Frontier* on the PC as much as *First Encounters*, but the best way to tell if you like it is to play the demo, you fool (unless you just skimmed through the review in the newsagent, in which case you really are a fool because you missed one of the greatest demos of all time). In summary then, dispassionate.

BODY OF EVIDENCE

Dear The Word, Thank God you ran the Body Snatchers article in your June issue as I have just been infected (as *The Word* would say). The feature by Jon Pyle was both informative and well laid out – I liked the nurse theme, please could you send her round with her rubber gloves to my home address ASAP!

I have to say that PC POWER is really shaping up to be a great magazine with a vibrant cover sense and a wry sense of humour. The "Joy of Sticks" is just another example of this. One thing though, I do not yet own a CD-ROM drive and am considering the different makes, could you recommend one?

But in the meantime please feature more cover HDs and game reviews of floppy products – it all seems to be CD these days! Well done on a great mag you guys. Richard Hutton, Bucks

Many thanks, Richard, the girl's on the way – with the stick of celery you lucky tart! On the subject of CD-ROM drives I'd have to recommend the Yamaha Quad speed drive for about £169. Unfortunately, software developers have embraced the CD-ROM as the future and all their attention is diverted into this area – bad news for floppy drive owners.

CDs are definitely better in the same way that they are a step forward over vinyl LPs, but that doesn't help people like yourself

who don't own a drive. The number of cover mounted HDs and CDs is a direct reflection of PC owners buying habits – PC POWER CD sells far more than HD and so the number of cover mounted disks on the latter have dwindled.

Luckily for you we are currently mounting a save the floppy campaign, spear-headed by a three floppy issue last month and two regular disks from now on. If the sales increase significantly then we will continue. It's up to you now...

RED HOT STICKS

Dear PC POWER, Just read "The Joy of Sticks" and I thought it was great. Rarely is hardware treated in such a light-hearted, but equally serious matter. Each stick was given a going over according to its appeal to you. As you no doubt play games far more than yer average PC owner, you are best placed to test sticks for long periods. It is all very well being swayed by the design, but will it break in a week?

The only complaint I have is that there wasn't enough of it! Only six pages – surely you could have filled more than that as there are literally hundreds of controllers for the PC. Maybe you could make this a regular feature?

The only other joystick article in the same vein was in PC Zone and the semi-nude girl was a treat, but a bit tacky – at least your girls can keep their kit on and still look horny. But what have cute females got to do with joysticks anyway (or is that a stupid question)? Aren't you PC mags just taking advantage of us defenceless males in order to sell mags?

Anyway, enough of such idle banter, nice feature, keep it up.

Dave Lennox, Norwich

I'm not sure about making The Joy of Sticks a regular feature because I simply don't know if I'll have the space every issue. Certainly there will be regular bulletins, perhaps quarterly? Yours is just one of the many letters we've had on the feature and I would like to thank you all for your comments.

Honestly though, Dave – how can you not see the connection between women and joysticks? Women enjoy the smooth contours and jutting shapes of the sticks just as much as men, more so in fact because they have a dual role – gaming and... hmm, perhaps we'd better change the subject. Of course we're taking advantage of you, Dave – if you want us to stop you only have to ask. I'll give you ten seconds...

...

...

...

Guess you're staying with us then, Dave. You know it makes sense.

Another month's letters section over so quickly, where does the time go? If you have been provoked into writing into PC POWER (and remember we give away a game every month for the most entertaining letter), then send your work to *The Word, PC POWER, Paragon House, St Peter's Road, Bournemouth, Dorset BH1 2JS*. All letters are read, the most amusing usually go in first. Ciao!



Joy. Sticks. Joysticks. Hence, 'The Joy Of Sticks'. We have fun here, we do.

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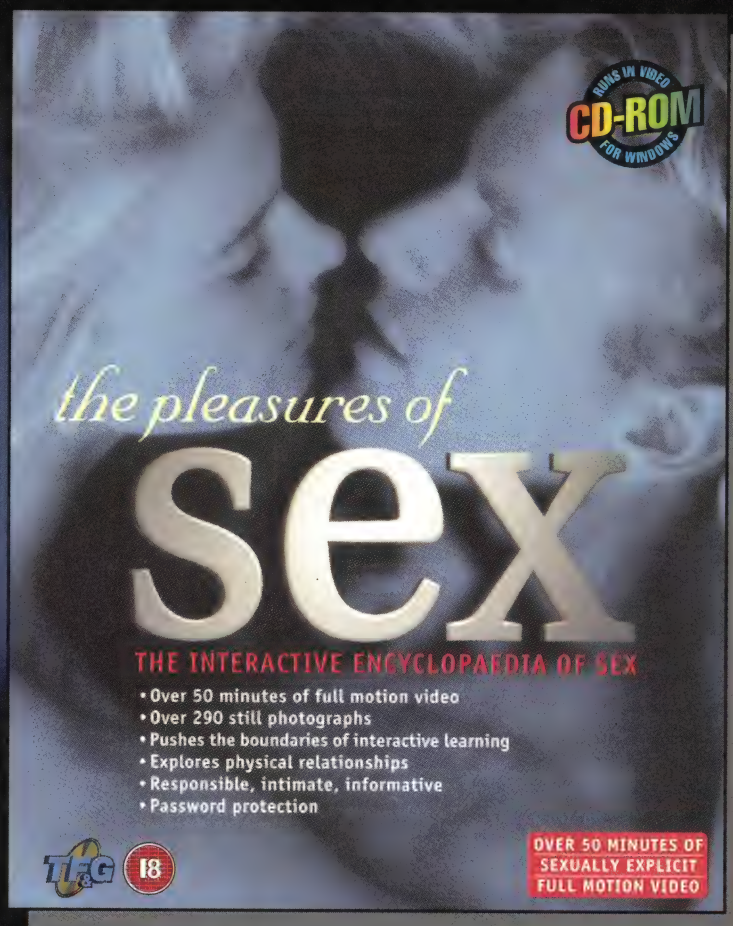
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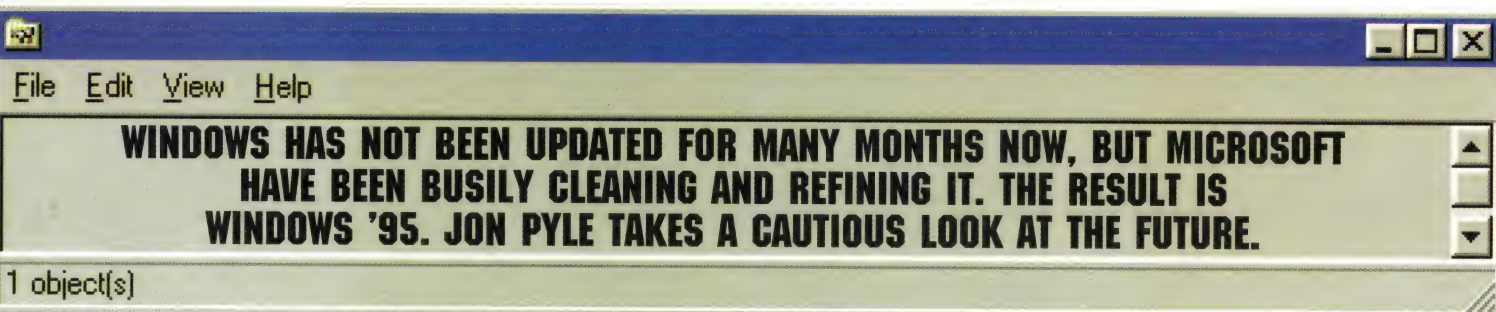
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STEAMY WINDOWS



Long ago, in a galaxy far, far away, there were the ancestors of the PC we know and love today. Huge machines manufactured by equally huge global companies like IBM and Digital. These companies spent the best part of 20 years building their respective empires around the fact that businesses needed large-scale computer equipment. These machines needed to be capable of servicing an entire organisation over a network. The software that drove these computers, their operating system, was geared towards making the most efficient use of the hardware, and because of this need for efficiency they used terse, cryptic commands, typed in by the user. Graphics were very rarely used on such systems because it was not feasible to send image files over the primitive networks of the time.

This situation changed with the desktop revolution, the omnipotent super-machines were superseded by personal computers, designed to be used by one person only. This made it possible for every user to work with graphics on their own desk and, after a little research, the idea of a Graphical User Interface (GUI) (pronounced 'goosey') was born.

The GUI was intended to replace those cryptic commands with situations more analogous to real life. For instance, DOS is very similar to early operating systems in its command structure. To dispose of a file in DOS, you use the 'DEL' command, which is an abbreviation of 'delete' – this association is not immediately obvious to a new user. In real life you would dispose of a file by placing it in the bin. The concept of a GUI was to use a picture of a file and another of a bin; bring the two together and you have deleted the file. GUIs apply this principle to all aspects of computing.

A number of companies began to see the importance of this new concept in the home/office market. Three of these hopefuls emerged as the major players quite early on: Apple, Atari and Commodore; and each carved a fairly equal stake in the home/office GUI-driven market. All three released machines sporting graphical interfaces; Apple with their operating system called 'System x', Atari with their aptly-named TOS (Tramiel Operating System) and Commodore with Amiga DOS. Microsoft did not want to be left behind in what is, was, and probably

always will be, their territory – so Windows V1.0 was released.

WHAT'S WRONG WITH WINDOWS?

When this first version of Windows was released, back when the 286 was the fastest hot-rod around, it was easily outshone by its rivals. The typical PC graphic adapters of the time were either monochrome, 4-colour or 16-colour (if you were really rich). This made the PC's only accepted graphical interface a terrible sight to behold. Worse still, even up to version 3.11, Windows has never been a real operating system. It began more as an addition to DOS than a replacement for it, and despite encroaching further and further into the ailing operating system's territory, Windows has always depended on DOS. Because of this dependency, Windows has suffered in terms of performance and efficiency, and all the while Apple's System 7/7.5 has prospered from its more streamlined, direct approach to controlling the machine. Something had to be done, and that something is Windows '95.

WHEN WILL IT BE FINISHED?

The version of '95 we have used here is the final Beta test release, so this article can only comment on the version we have. Microsoft insist that the full version will be available in August 1995 and doubtless it will have changed a little by then. Microsoft have left some important debugging information and bug reporting software in this version.

The end result is to make Windows Beta bulkier and slower than it should be, but it is a necessary part of the ongoing testing program. Once this testing is finished, the debugging information will be removed, producing a faster, leaner final version. Until then, the Beta is the closest most of us are likely to get.

WHY RELEASE A BETA?

Windows '95 Beta was unleashed on the computer industry as part of an immense testing drive. The computing industry is overrun with third-party hardware and software – and the manufacturers of these products

tend to invent their own standards for controlling them. For this reason, Microsoft could not hope to test the new operating system on every conceivable machine, so they asked the end users to do it instead, thereby exposing the program to as wide a variety of systems as possible.

With this in mind, Microsoft have included a utility called WinBug as part of the installation process to help users report their faults in a structured way. This program acts like an electronic form, the user just needs to fill in their own details and a description of the fault, print it out and send it to Microsoft. They even welcome suggestions for additions to the package. This is the first time a Beta test has been released on such an immense scale, and it can only benefit PC users.

WHAT'S DIFFERENT ABOUT '95?

The most prominent, and possibly the most important difference with the new Windows is that it does away with DOS almost completely. Instead of your machine reporting 'Starting MS-DOS' at boot-up, it now reports 'Starting Windows '95'. Don't panic though, a machine running Windows '95 can still be used to run DOS as normal, as we shall see later, but it is clear that DOS is only

really there for compatibility's sake; you can expect to see less and less of it in the future.

Now that we can safely assume that DOS is on its way out, the limitation on filename lengths (eight characters plus a three-letter extension, all in cap-

Changing the way that filenames are stored is a great departure as it implies changing the very method behind organising files on the hard disk. Normally such a drastic change would require the hard disk to be reformatted, destroying all of the information already stored there. Microsoft have got around this problem by including the '~1' part of the filename. This unlikely addition to the name is used as a method of identifying the file as having an extended name, but no amount of scouring my hard disk would reveal where Windows had stored the remaining characters of the long file names.

GROUPS AND ICONS

Naturally the look and feel of Windows has changed substantially in the new version, the whole method of associating icons to files has been revamped in a far more pleasing way. Windows has so far arranged programs and documents into groups with each group appearing as a window containing related icons. Every icon had to be set up either by an installation program, or by hand. If you wanted a Word document to appear in a group, you had to select 'File' from the Program Manager, then select 'New'. The type of new item then needed to be identified – either a new group or a new icon within an existing group. Then the location and filename of the file had to be entered, and finally a suitable icon for that item had to be chosen from a list.

Windows '95 has done away with the old Program Manager, replacing it with the Desktop. This shows the hardware and software available to you. The most important part of this is 'My Computer'. Double-clicking this opens a display of your hard disk with every file and every directory depicted by an icon. There is no need to assign the type of a file before you attempt to use it – Windows '95 actually reads the first few bytes of the file to determine whether it is a Windows program, a DOS program or a data file – and many of the data file formats are identified automatically.

THE WIDER VIEW

Program Manager provided a view of your applications and the most important data on your system, but the quasi-equivalent Desktop in Windows '95 goes much further; some parts even extend across the globe.



itals) has finally been consigned to the history books. The first example of this I could find was a directory named 'Program Files' which came as part of the installation. Under the Windows '95 DOS prompt though, the name appears in its shortened form on the left of a directory listing, with its full name on the right. When copying, deleting and generally messing about with files, the long version of the name is still accepted by DOS, but only if you are running the W95 DOS prompt. Under proper DOS 6.22, the file appears as 'PRO- GRA~1' with no listing of its extended form; the result is a less than helpful description of the directory's contents.

The Desktop splits the hardware and software available to you into several icons. These include your computer, any local networks you are connected to, the 'recycling bin' (where deleted files go when they die), your 'brief case' (basically a list of the documents you use most frequently), and 'InBox', where new data can be placed for you to look at later. There is also the Microsoft Network, a dial-up service à la Internet and Compuserve.

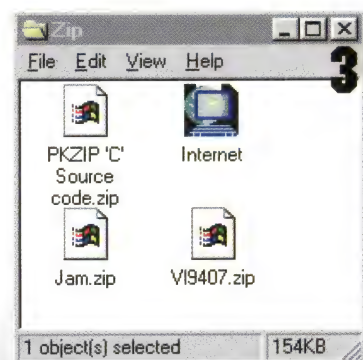
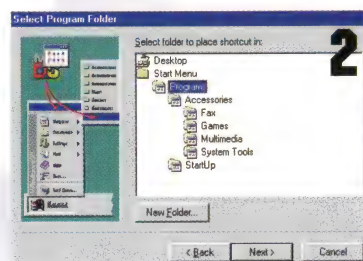
The most frequently used part of the Desktop is the TaskBar. This holds a list of the programs currently running on your machine, a real-time clock and, most importantly, the 'Start' menu. This is almost exactly the same as Apple's 'Shortcut' menu system. A single click on this icon opens a sub-menu of programs and further sub-menus giving you instant access to just about any application.

The system utilities which used to appear in the 'Main' and 'Accessories' groups in older versions of Windows are arranged here in simple sub-menus. You can even add your own shortcuts to major applications (my first was *Word 6*), and Windows automatically stores the most frequently used documents here and a link to the application used to edit them. Using this system, any recently-used document can be selected, launching the related application and loading the document ready for editing – very neat and tidy.

TASK FORCE

A once popular machine, the Commodore Amiga, was my first experience of a technique known as multitasking. This principle allows two or more programs to run on the same processor at apparently the same time. Have you ever wished that, while installing a huge application, you could return to another program and continue your work while the installation carries on doing its thing? OS/2 users have had access to these features since its first release. Remember the OS/2 Warp adverts with the daft short-haired woman shouting "Where's the hourglass? I can't see the hourglass!"? Calm down lady, Apple Mac and Amiga users have been using multitasking from day one, in fact every major operating system since UNIX has done so. The only big deal is that it took the PC this long to catch up.

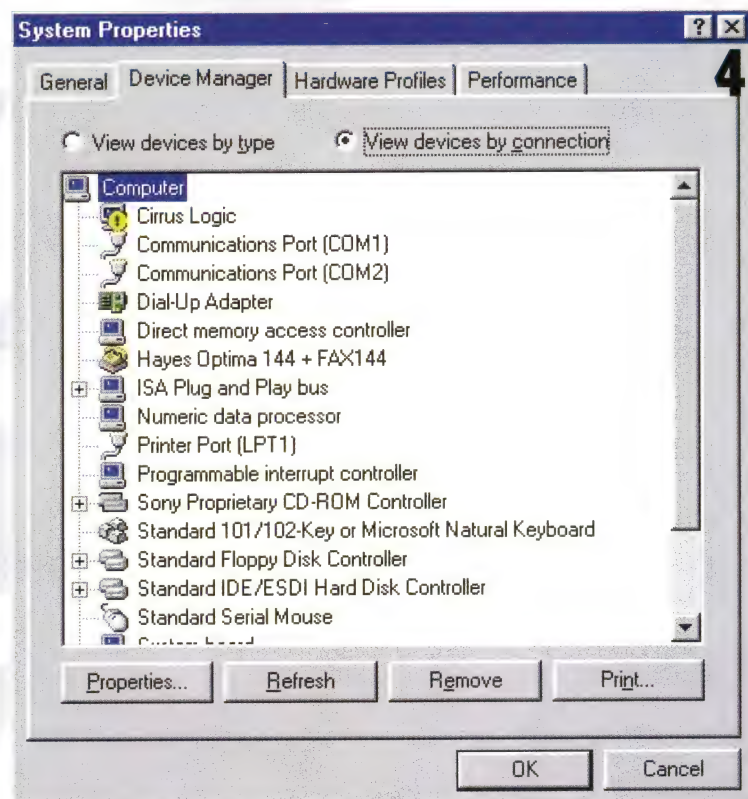
Despite its late arrival to the PC, Windows has been able to produce variations on the theme of multitasking since version 1.0, but the real daddy of multitasking – pre-emptive task management – has so far eluded Windows developers. Pre-emptive multitasking allows the operating system to divide the processor's power into 'time slices'. These small segments of the processor's valuable time are doled out to programs (or 'tasks') depending on how important they are. For instance, a program



1 *IndyCar* paused in a window - magic or what? 2 Create your own shortcuts to save time. 3 Windows '95 lets you give your files a name that you can actually recognise. 4 The CONFIG.SYS is no longer your problem with Plug 'n' Play devices.

rendering a 3-D image will be considered very important and most of the time slices will be devoted to it, whereas the program controlling the mouse pointer will be virtually ignored.

In Windows '95, pre-emptive multitasking is fully supported (hallelujah!). A massive batch job can be started under DOS and, while this is processed, you can run off and do whatever you like – edit documents, play Windows games or even log onto a network. Naturally some applications earmark all of the avail-



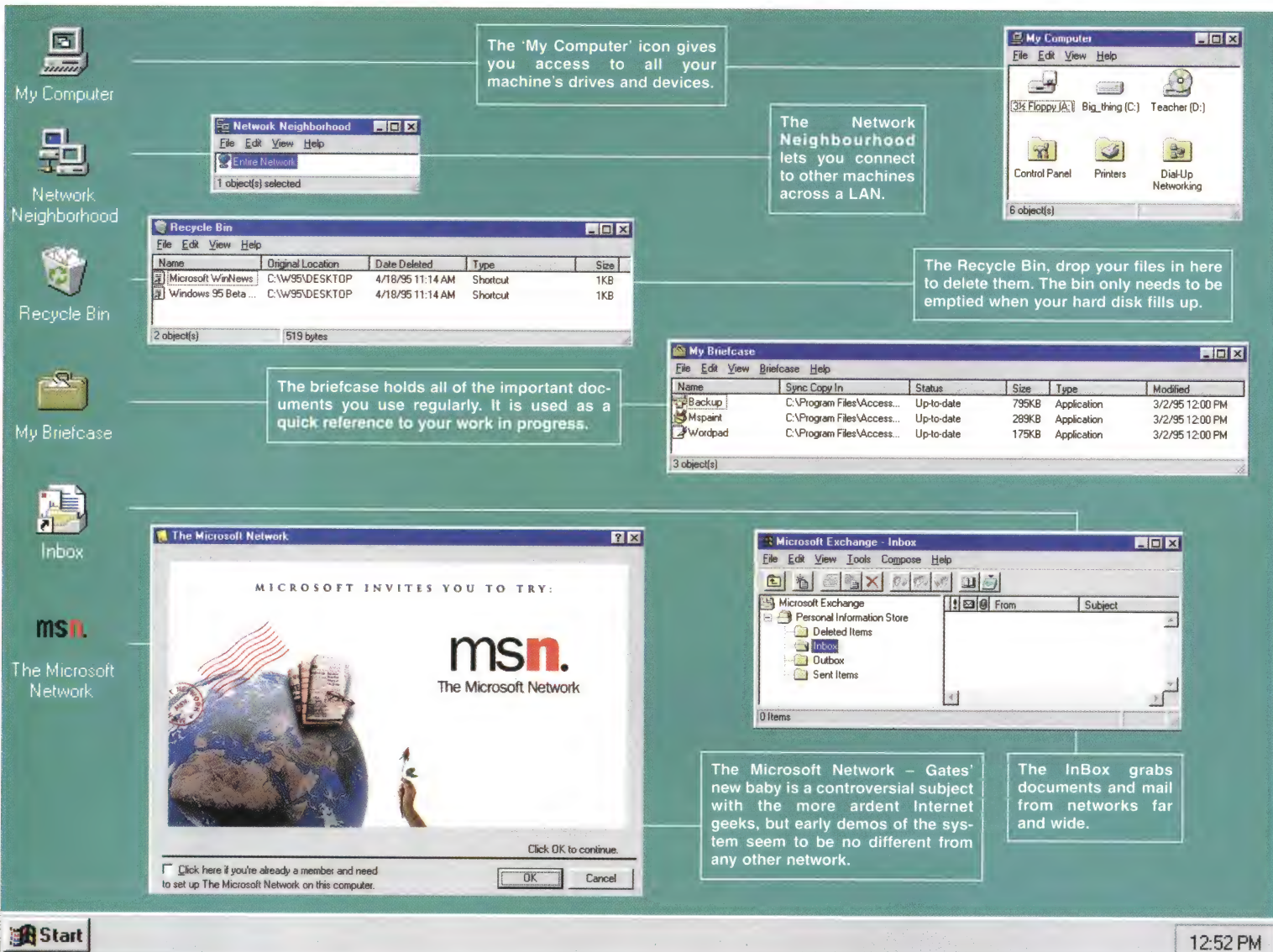
able time slices for themselves. Defrag, for example, grabs all of the available processor time as it cannot trust other programs not to modify the hard disk while it is working. If this were to happen it would spell disaster for much of your data.

The new task management has introduced a new pointer state. Previously there were two pointers, the arrow and the hourglass. With Windows '95, a third state is possible – a pointer and hourglass side-by-side. This means that the currently selected application is busy, but oth-

ers are still available to be used at the same time and this saves an immense amount of time.

MULTIMEDIA

The main advantages to Windows 3.1 and 3.11 over its predecessors were network and multimedia support. Video for Windows has always been an additional Windows component, installed separately, but Windows '95 has included it as standard and improved it immensely. Running a 320 by 200 pixel AVI animation can now be achieved in full



screen mode with sound at an acceptable frame rate. A CD player is included in the accessories menu, along with the obligatory Media Player which still does the same job it always did.

A major new addition to Windows '95 is the 'Spin and Grin' standard. This allows a specially adapted audio CD to be used as an interactive guide to the topic of your fancy. *Peter Gabriel's Xplora 1* has so far been the most successful multimedia album, but it does not conform to the new standard. The first of these interactive tours is provided by metal band Alice in Chains. Microsoft were keenly showing off the standard at the ECTS show. They enthusiastically demonstrated how 'Spin and Grin' could make an apparently normal audio CD expand into an interactive tour featuring snippets of the band's previous and forthcoming releases, a listing of the lyrics from the album and many pieces of Alice-esque artwork.

COMPATIBILITY

Whenever a company updates such an important piece of software as an operating system, the issue of compatibility must be taken into account. Windows '95 copes with this knotty problem through two methods. Firstly there is the MS-DOS prompt

launched from the Desktop. The old Windows DOS prompt was less than impressive, it allowed two megabytes of RAM in DOS mode and could not run any games software at all.

The new DOS prompt has to be seen to be believed. It plays normal *Doom* in full screen mode with no loss of speed. In fact many games programs speed up when accessing the hard disk as they benefit from the Windows disk handling software, which is far more efficient than the original DOS routines. When a game like *Doom* is returned to its windowed state as part of the Desktop (by pressing Alt+Enter) it pauses, allowing you to continue with your work and return to the game at any time. This feature will eventually be invaluable to us journo. Imagine playing a game, pressing Alt+Enter and clicking into *Word 6* to quickly update your review to reflect what you've just seen in the game. You could then take a screenshot of the situation at the press of a button and return to the game by double-clicking on it.

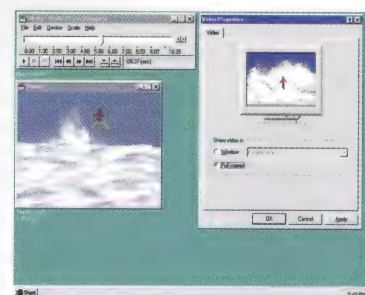
This is the stuff that dreams are made of, but it is limited. The Beta version of the DOS prompt tended to crash when changing between windowed and full screen modes and many games will still only work under

the proper, full version of DOS.

This leads me nicely on to the second method Microsoft have used to ensure compatibility with older software. When booting Windows '95, the F8 key can be pressed at any time to bring up a menu of booting options. One of these options (called 'safe mode') uses the standard VGA display driver and no other complicated driver software. This ensures that if you install the wrong display driver, you will still be able to see what you are doing and change it. Another important option on this menu is 'Previously Installed Version of DOS'. This boots under MS-DOS exactly as it would without Windows '95 installed. You are free to run older versions of Windows and play around with software which would not otherwise work.

HARDWARE

Another important development is Plug 'n' Play, and Windows '95 is the final instalment in its development. P'n'P allows you to add hardware to your machine by simply plugging it in and asking Windows to look for it. No more messing around with AUTOEXEC.BAT and CONFIG.SYS. The idea is that you need never see these things again, and I for one will be glad of that.



The new full-motion player in Windows '95 includes a full screen mode which is actually watchable! Will the wonders never cease?

AND FINALLY...

What can we expect to see from Microsoft after the release of '95? Well, there will undoubtedly be updates to the whole Microsoft Home range to take advantage of the new features. Multimedia packages will begin using the new full screen AVI mode in abundance and there might possibly be a Pentium optimised version of Windows '95. When the Pentium was first released, Intel suggested that programs could be written in such a way that they would make more efficient use of the processor. If Microsoft have considered this as a possibility, then what better to optimise than the operating system – the cornerstone of the whole machine? (P)

the new

from

GIZMOS GREMLIN

Forgoing sunny Bournemouth for the cold northerly winds of Sheffield, Keith Pullin risks hypothermia to bring you this report on what Gremlin will be throwing our way this Autumn.

Gremlin Graphics are another developer/publisher who have gone through a bit of a change recently. Following their stable yet unspectacular line-up that took them through the early part of 1995, they've decided to bring in the physicians and mathematicians. They immediately set to work with the mercurial Tony Crowther (creator of classics such as *Captive* and *Liberation*) and came up with some mind expanding 3-D routines. The forthcoming range of titles are the product of a new breed of Gremlin, one with its own motion capture studio, sound studio and, to round it off, a \$250,000 piece of hardware known as an Onyx Silicon Graphics Computer. Gremlin now have the power to produce stunning

games, but the question is, can they do it? The answer won't be apparent for another couple of months, but for the time being we can at least have a sneaky look at how they're shaping up...

NORMALITY INC

A cross between *Doom*, *Dark Forces* and a host of crazy point 'n' click adventures such as *Sam & Max* and *Day of the Tentacle*, this bizarre game features a land, similar to the one we live in, that's been taken over by dullness?! The idea is to move around the world – consisting of sixteen main levels, with a multitude of sub-levels, and restore it to its rightful weirdness.

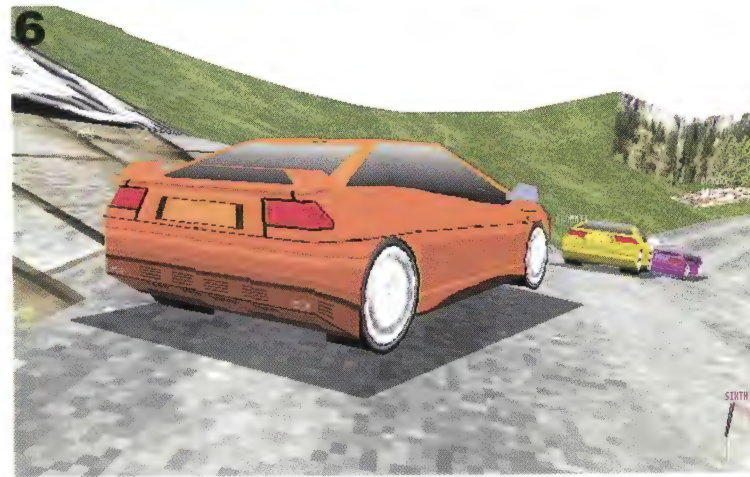
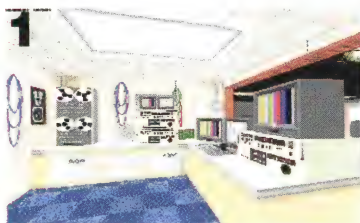
As you can see from the screenshots, the background graphics are

highly atmospheric, with fume-belching chimneys dominating the dismal skyline. Everyday buildings such as video shops have been included in the game, so the whole feel of *Normality Inc* is outwardly yet strangely real.

What you can't see from the shots (this particular title is about two months away from completion) is the other characters you'll find in the game. All intelligent, the final characters will actually be motion captured actors, who will do all the things you'd expect a human to do. One animation they were working on while I was there was the climbing out of a window scene. The idea of course is to make all the characters' movements as realistic as possible and judging by some of the exam-

ples I was shown, including a dancing main character, that has been achieved.

Normality Inc will be the first game to blend motion capture techniques with a *Doom* style game engine incorporating a point 'n' click interface. It's certainly one to look out for and we'll bring you more news and information when we have it. In fact, we should have an exclusive demo for you soon!





FATAL RACING

Gremlin's offering to the melting pot of racing games due out towards the end of the year looks to be the nearest thing to *Ridge Racer* on the PC. The graphics look pretty similar to the classic arcade game and the back of the car even swings out in the same manner.

But *Fatal Racing* differs in the way that you are the test driver, the idea being that you start off working for a lowly car manufacturer with the ultimate goal of testing for somebody like McLaren. The names of real manufacturers haven't been included, even though Gremlin hold the rights to the Lotus license. The trouble there is that Lotus won't allow any of their vehicles to be shown crashing or wrecked – not good for the image!

Each time you make it to a new company, the track becomes more difficult. Not only are there tarmac courses to burn rubber on, but sand, dirt and snow tracks must also be navigated if you want to make it big.

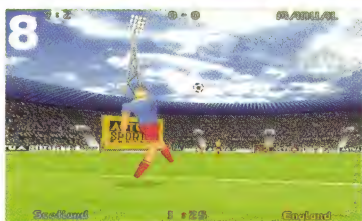
Offering almost limitless viewing angles as well as a link-up facility, *Fatal Racing* should be a contender for pole position.

ACTUA SOCCER

Featuring motion captured moves performed by Sheffield Wednesday stars Chris Woods and Andy Sinton, *Actua Soccer* is one of the most visually realistic football games ever made for the PC. The standard of animation is so high that unfortunately it looks as though this incredible looking footy sim will only run on a Pentium.

Using a free roaming camera, the action can be viewed from any angle, and that includes from the players' eyes and even from the ball – bizarre!

Included in the game will of course be all the normal leagues and competitions as well as a unique world nations tournament. Full commentary will also be present in the finished version along with all the normal chants and cheers from the crowd. And if you thought the multi-player options on football games where pretty weak, then prepare yourself for up to twenty players



7 The lad's got two good feet! Pity they're not attached to his legs.

8 Every conceivable camera angle is available. **9** All the moves were performed by Sheffield Wednesday stars.

10 The library in *Realm of the Haunted*.

11 Part of the *K240* intro.

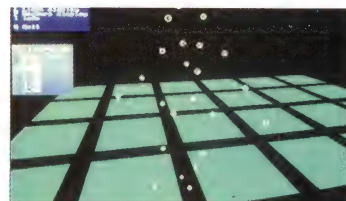
linked up. With the two goalkeepers computer controlled, the rest of the players can all be human and can all play simultaneously.

If there's going to be an arcade football game to knock *Sensible Soccer* off the top spot, this will be the one. It all depends on the game-play of course, we all know that while good graphics are important for football games, a flowing and realistic control method is absolutely imperative. We eagerly await the start of the new season...

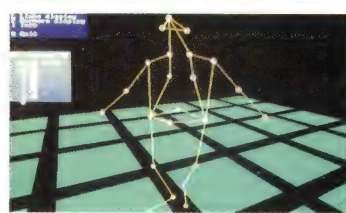
REALM OF THE HAUNTED

Another *Doomish* game set in the 1930s, this HP Lovecraft type affair places you in a beautiful mansion which is not all it seems. Using an Amityville type scenario, you slowly learn that beneath the house lies hell! A definite problem for the estate agent which is compounded by the ghouls, demons and ghosts already lurking in the richly adorned rooms and corridors.

WORLD IN MOTION



After investing nearly £200,000, Gremlin now have the only commercial motion capture system in Europe. The system, called HiRES, uses round markers made up from millions of highly reflective tiny spheres that are placed on a subject. Six cameras then track and record the subject, and the captured movement can be recreated on a computer from any angle.



One aspect the programmers have been working on tirelessly is the texture mapping which hardly pixelates at all, even close up. It's a notable effort and along with many of the objects, which have eight possible viewing angles rather than the cardboard cut-out two, there's a general solidity to the game which is good to see.

The whole atmosphere is very similar to *Under a Killing Moon*, in fact Gremlin will have to be careful not to take too much influence from that. Otherwise, with its selection of spells to throw around and digitised bad guys to maim, *ROTH* should be reasonable but maybe not as stunning as their other forthcoming delights.

K240

A conversion of the old Amiga game, *K240* is the follow-up to *Utopia*. Now you may wonder why it's taken so

long for this to appear, I wondered that too and to be honest there's no real answer. I think the nearest to the truth that we'll get is that there were too many other original projects to warrant spending time on an old game.

Anyway, it's one of those space colonisation games whereby after the destruction of the Earth you start life again in a galaxy far away. But the re-birth yields problems, none more so than the ever present threat of alien invasion. *K240* is going to be spruced up with some neat rendered cut sequences as well as a few scenes created with the help of that wonderful motion capture equipment.

Gremlin insist that rather than just doing a straight port, it will be completely revamped. It was an excellent space strategy on the Amiga, however the PC does seem to have an abundance of those. We will wait and see. (1)

Formerly known as Zeppelin Games, much has changed since PC POWER's last visit to this Gateshead office, not least the entire staff of our mag. Similarly, the once small budget software developers have undergone an equally marked shift in emphasis.

On arrival, we were ushered into the office of European Project Coordinator, Malcolm Montgomery, by Kev Shaw – possibly the most hirsute game designer/PR man in the country. We were quickly joined by Andrew Richards (a prominent programmer at the company), two bottles of Beck's and a plate of chicken salad sandwiches. After a brief conversation about the epic journey from

Bournemouth to Newcastle, Malcolm began to recap the company's history whilst simultaneously utilising the edge of his desk as an impromptu bottle-opener, causing wood shavings to fall to the floor, landing amongst a small congregation of earlier chippings.

"Zeppelin Games was co-founded by our MD Brian Jobling in 1987 when he was still a programmer. At that time our main market was in Amiga budget games. We had plenty of success there, but one year we visited an American trade show intending to sell some games but there were barely any Amigas in sight, it was totally dominated by the PC. European software companies didn't seem to have woken up to this

at the time, so we decided to make an early move into the PC market."

So Brian's team returned to England with an armful of Amiga titles, promptly scrapped many of their development projects on the ailing Commodore machine and set to work developing for the newly emerging PC games market.

"Initially we did well, but we miscalculated how soon the 486 would take over from the 386 and that caused us to shelve a few more titles. Nowadays, the base machine we aim for is a 486-DX66, that way we can pack in plenty of effects and make sure that our games are available to the majority of PC owners." When asked how they intend to support more powerful machines, he

answered "Usually by adding extra options for machines that can cope with the added workload. We have no specific plan to support one piece of hardware or another, but if a game benefits enough from options like SVGA graphics, then we do our best to include it."

Dead Zeppelin

Zeppelin Games' developments did not escape the attention of the big boys for long. Soon after their move to the PC, they were approached by Merit Studios (US) and were quickly bought up by them, changing their name to Merit Studios (Europe) in the process. Merit US immediately injected the UK company with cash to fund more ambitious projects.

TECHNICAL

Project name: Harvester

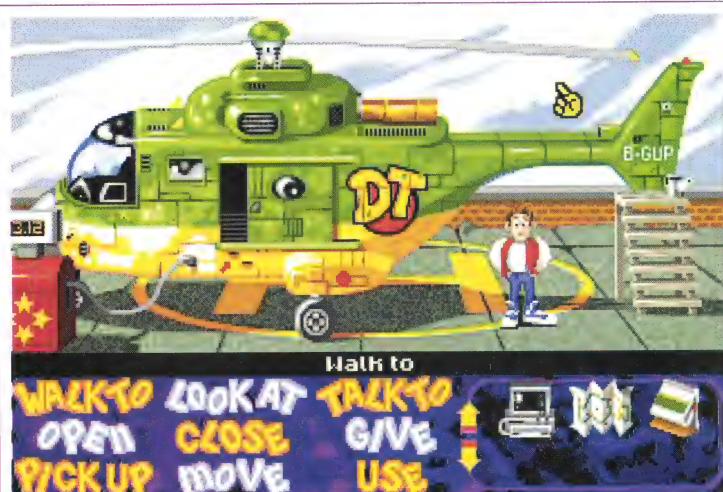
Progress: Undergoing final testing

An intriguing mix of adventure and role-playing, its story line is from the pen of GP Austin (who was responsible for the action games *Privateer* and *Strike Commander*) and places you as an amnesiac in a small middle-American town called Harvest. The action takes place in an SVGA 640x480x256 pre-rendered environment. In addition to the stunning location backdrops, recorded SVGA video footage is used to full effect whenever you meet one of Harvest's other inhabitants.

Your top priority is to find out as much about your lost memories as possible. Initially, your existence doesn't seem half bad. You've lived in Harvest all your life, you're engaged to the drop-dead-gorgeous girl next door and everyone is pleasant and polite. This illusion is shattered one morning when you awake to find your girlfriend gone and a human skull and spinal column in her place. Whether they are hers or not, you do not know. The plot has been carefully orchestrated to enclose the town in a *Stepford Wives*-ish atmosphere which is never more apparent than when you speak to the characters involved. The question is, involved in what?



An early shot from *Harvester*. Zombie Flesh Eaters meets *The Stepford Wives*?



Bud Tucker takes a breather while he fills up his chopper.

Project name: Bud Tucker in Double Trouble

Progress: Due for release "in the third quarter of 1995."

Bud Tucker is a teenage pizza delivery boy in a town called Muddy Creek. When his best customer, an eccentric old scientist known only as The Professor, suddenly disappears, Bud smells a rat (probably in the pizza) and sets off on his trail. To begin with, his only clue is a book of matches from a nearby strip joint which he finds in The Professor's house. These matches lead you to the first real hint at the game's tongue-in-cheek style. The strip joint features a scantily-clad woman pacing up and down seductively in front of a wallpapered mock-up of a living room. From time to time she gives an idle scrape at the wallpaper with a sharp blade – the club turns out to be a wallpaper stripping joint, weird or what?

The story line all takes place in a humorous cartoon world, kind of *Tom and Jerry* meets *Bottom*. The graphics are mostly from the twisted mind of artist David Taylor, the dialogue has been written by Derek Mante, best known as a scriptwriter for the BBC2 series *Naked Video*, and the result is a risqué point 'n' click adventure with more gags than a roomful of hostages.

"The extra finance has meant that we can develop full priced games with far longer development times," enthused Managing Director Brian Jobling. He wasn't kidding either, Merit have just released their first full priced PC game, *Alex Dampier's Pro Hockey* (see review on page 44). They also have a total of five full priced products in development and have completed work on their own full motion video system in time to include it in *Alex Dampier*.

Three of Merit's forthcoming games are still being referred to by their working titles. "We're nervous about naming games too early as the public tend to get bored of the hype before the game's finished," explained Kev Shaw, and the evidence is in his

favour. Jez San's BRender is a case in point; by the time it managed to reach the stage where our Ed, Damian, was able to see it in action, two similar systems had already been released by rival software companies. Despite the secrecy, Merit were able to give PC POWER an exclusive first look at their upcoming titles; we spill the beans below.

Merit have clearly come a long way since their humble Amiga origins, but what remains to be seen is how they fare in the cut and thrust world of full priced PC games. Either way, you're bound to find out as PC POWER will be reporting on these games as they happen, and rest assured that we'll keep you posted on further events. (1)



The Merit posse pile out for a photo-opportunity in the sunshine. If you think we're going to name everybody in the picture, you're sadly mistaken.

MERIT

Merit Studios have been moving upward and outward recently.

Following an arduous journey across England to the sunny Northeast, the bleary-eyed Jon Pyle and Sam Scoble bring you this report on the rapidly expanding software company.

Project name: Project 'S'

Progress: Early stages

This is the first of Merit's developments which is still protected by a working title. It is a gritty point 'n' click adventure set in the not too distant future. The AIDS virus has been conquered, causing a new sexual revolution. Sleaze, violence, nudity and sex are smattered liberally throughout the game and it is likely (if not downright certain) to be given an 18 classification by ELSA.

The development team plan to include many new techniques in 'S', such as the ability for locations to change without prompting, so other characters and chance events can affect your plans quite inadvertently. Musician/sound effects man Tim Haywood has some equally revolutionary ideas. "I want to create more realistic three dimensional sound effects which move and fade as your character changes position on the screen." His current soundtrack to 'S' is an ambient groove, but he plans to add some "Real Hardcore" music later.



The cyberpunk/pornographic feel of 'S' owes much to the artistic skill of Jonathan Jones and Michael Cairns. Be prepared for some sleazy imagery.



The rather Woody Allen-esque chap cowering in the middle of this picture is Andrew Richards, author of the provisionally titled *Andrew Richards' Racing*. It looked very impressive, but he wouldn't let us take a picture of it. Damn.

Project name: Andrew Richards' Racing

Progress: Very early stages, open-ended schedule.

Programmer Andrew Richards has already been responsible for such triumphs as *Pete Sampras' Tennis* on the Sega Mega Drive and the recently completed Merit Video System (see the 'making of *11th Hour*' demo on this month's cover CD).

His latest project is a cross between *Virtua Racing* and *Daytona* – both of which were huge arcade hits for Sega and have recently migrated to the Sega Saturn. Andrew's task is to create a similar game on the PC and although the version we saw was only showing one car at a time, the rendering engine seems to be quite capable of some pretty complex effects. The rotating *Daytona* racing car on Andrew's monitor screen carries his motto, "I can do better than Sega", texture mapped onto the passenger door.

Oh, Brother!

We've gone printer mad this month, our technical editor Jon Pyle was last seen roaming the streets of Bournemouth muttering "printers... printers... printers..." and foaming at the mouth (no change there then – Ed). If you want to prevent this unpleasant condition from happening to you, we suggest you take a look at this month's excellent competition.

Brother-ly love

Those smashing generous people at Brother have just released a brand spanking new laser printer, so brand spanking new that we couldn't feature it in this month's guide – but rest assured it will be reviewed in next month's technical section.

The new printer, called the Brother HJ630, is a professional quality, black and white laser capable of a pinpoint-accurate 600 dots per inch at a scorching six pages per minute. It's fully compatible with Windows and DOS, handles both graphics and text, plus it features the latest generation of money-saving ideas to cut down on electricity and toner cartridges. What more could you ask?

Well, you could ask Brother to start giving them away free of charge, but you'd be too late because they've already done it. We've been given a shiny new HJ630 to give away as a competition prize and all you have to do

is answer three questions.

There is a catch though – you see we'd prefer not to give this little baby away, Jon wants it to be his friend while he convalesces in the local pub, so the questions aren't going to be easy.

Send your (undoubtedly incorrect) answers on a postcard to *Oh, Brother! Compo, PC POWER, Paragon House, St Peter's Road, Bournemouth, Dorset BH1 2JS*. Entries that reach us after the closing date of July 14 will be ceremonially fed into Damian's new executive toy, his pocket paper shredder.



Um. This picture, as the sharp-eyed amongst you might notice, isn't actually an HJ630. Don't worry, though – the real prize is even neater than the one pictured here. What happened to the picture of the HJ360? We blame sunspots. Or Keith's trousers. Or something. It's not our fault, honestly. No, really.

To recap, you can win Brother's latest spiffy laser print-

er – the HJ630 – by answering these three questions correctly.

1: Who was Danny De Vito's **brother** in the Hollywood movie, *Twins*?

**A: Suzanne Dando B: Dolph Lundgren
C: Arnold Schwarzenegger**

2: Which of the Marx **brothers** never spoke?

**A: Karl B: Groucho
C: Harpo**

3: Does our editor, Damian Butt, have a **brother**?

**A: No B: Maybe
C: Yes**

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PC POWER

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The reviewing system in PC POWER is simple. We say what we think of the game and then leave it up for you to decide. Our dedicated team of professionals know every game inside and out and we don't prejudice a particular genre just because "It's not our sort of game."

The ratings system is simple, but you may find our reviews much harsher than other magazines. To be frank, we don't care, because if you are going to spend £40 say on a new game, you want to be sure that it's the one for you, and that's where we come in. Here's what the percentages mean in PC POWER.

90%+: A classic game and one that should definitely be in your collection. Games over 90% are awarded the PC POWER Platinum award (catchy, huh?) and it generally means they've disrupted work in the office for days.

80-89%: A high class title that, while not perfect, is still worth a serious look, especially if you're into the genre.

65-79%: Not a dire game by any means, but it does contain some significant gameplay flaws and may irritate over time. This is generally the most common mark in any magazine, but it is still above average.

50-64%: A distinctly average game that doesn't really excel in any areas or get the juices flowing.

30-49%: Games like *Rise of the Robots* fall into this category, ie all graphics and no gameplay at all. A game that gets 30% is pretty awful and not worth the money. Avoid unless you need a natty CD shaped ashtray.

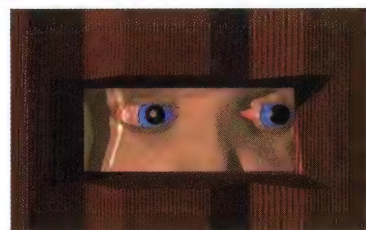
Under 30%: A real dog turd of a game that sits on the shelf looking wretched. Not worth the bus fare into town.

Virtual Pool



CD REVIEW

Steve Hill
plays pocket
billiards. As
usual...

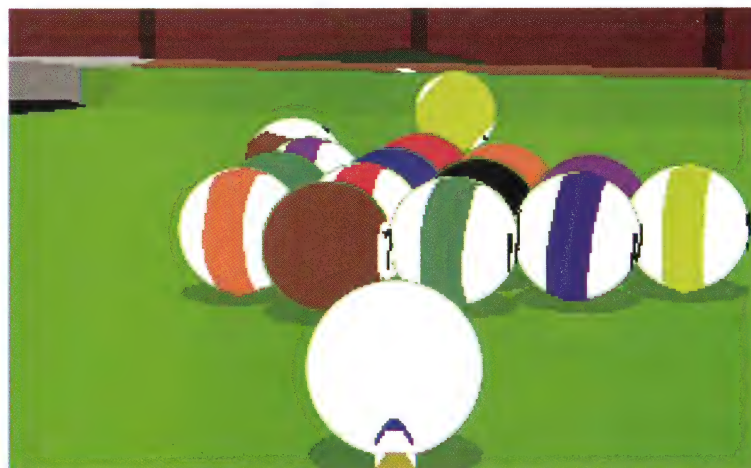


This is what happens if you sit too close to your PC monitor. Probably.

Anyway, pool it is, and *Virtual Pool* is an excellent simulation, incorporating every facet of the game, apart from fag burns on the table and knocking people's pints over with your cue. The intro shows a shady looking pool room with a pair of bloodshot eyes appearing at a window. You are then presented with a comprehensive menu, offering a variety of choices. 'History of Pool' is fairly self-explanatory and is a guided tour of pool through the ages, from Victorian times up to the film *The Color of Money*, including pictures of Tom Cruise and Paul Newman. One notable oversight is the failure to include pool's most significant contribution to film history, the notorious balls in the sock scene from *Scum*, where the prospective 'Daddy' (4737, Carlin, Sir) demonstrates the use of pool balls as unique forms of diplomacy, introducing them to the head of a rival, followed by the immortal line, "Back grass! I said back, s***head!"

Number... nine

But I digress, mainly because there's not a great deal to be said. Everyone knows what pool is like and this is an accurate



"Pot the reds and, screw back, for the yellow, green, brown, blue, pink and black." So sang chirpy cockneys Chas 'n' Dave in their 1986 paean to the green baize. But this is pool, not snooker, so why is it being endorsed by Steve 'not actually interesting at all' Davis and Ronnie 'my old man's doing a ten-stretch' O'Sullivan? Probably because there are no famous pool players, unless you include that fat bloke who used to occasionally appear on *World of Sport*.

POOL FOR YOUR LOVIN'



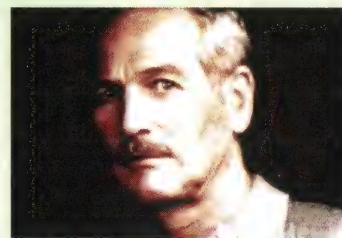
Mary, Queen of Scots was apparently a reasonable pool player, until she had her head cut off.



A prototype version of the scruffy, beer-stained, coin-guzzling tables we know and love.



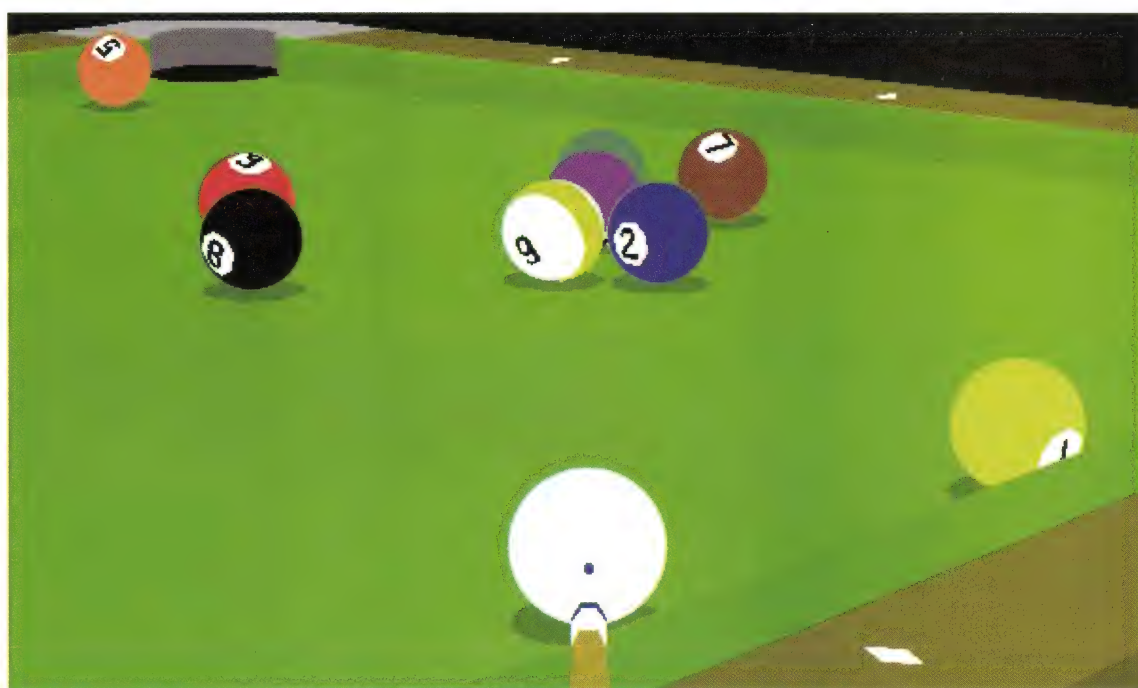
Allegedly, Napoleon used to give Nelson an occasional hammering, helped by his arm advantage.



Paul Newman, star of *The Hustler* and *The Color of Money*, in unfortunate 'tache scenario.

representation of the game, playing just like the real thing. There are four different types of game to choose from, which adds some variety. Nine Ball involves, predictably enough, nine balls, which must be potted in numerical order, victory going to whoever sinks the nine. Eight Ball is your regular spots and stripes affair, followed by potting the black. Straight Pool is the typical American "five ball, corner pocket" game and is based on a system of scoring a predetermined number of points. Finally, Rotation Pool involves scoring the value of each ball, the winner being the first to 61 points. Some of the rules tend to differ from the traditional pub rules, but you can't really enter into a drunken argument with your PC as you would in a normal situation. There is a full tutorial explaining each game as well as showing you how to perform a variety of trick shots and there is a practice mode with which to hone your ball skills.

You can pit your wits against another player, either in person or via a network or modem link-up, and, of course, there is a one player option for when everyone else has gone down the boozer for a real game. There are nine different computer players to compete against, each with progressively increasing skill levels. At the bottom of the scale is the aptly named Mrs Offen, who has all the potting prowess of Stevie Wonder in a blackout, and other wackily-named players include Troy Zinvane, Bram Stroker, and the top dog, Dead Eye Dan, against whom one mistake is usually punished by a total clearance.



Eek! A mouse

The game is controlled via a combination of mouse and keyboard. Various keys select functions such as raising the butt and adding spin, and the mouse acts as a virtual cue, with power administered depending on the speed at which you thrust it forward. Consequently, it is advisable to use a mouse mat with a reasonable amount of grip if you want to give it some elbow. You soon manage to gauge the power required and can start to put together some nifty breaks. The physics of *Virtual Pool* are immaculate, with all of the balls reacting exactly as you would expect on a real table, right down to the roll and spin. You can also zoom in and out of the

action and view the table from any angle you choose, including upside down to emulate those really heavy nights.

The graphics are crisp and clear, with the numbers on the balls clearly visible and the cue

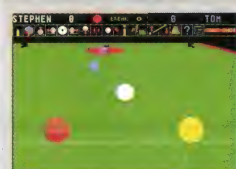
There is, of course, a one-player option for when everyone else has gone down the boozer for a real game...

hovering smoothly above the table. As for the sound, the click of the balls is realistic enough but the music is not something you'd choose to have on your

Walkman. A kind of free form piano-based affair, it occasionally resembles the background music on *Bullseye* before drifting into the theme tune of *Big Break* and that tune that always accompanies the compilation of 'funny' bits at the end of a major tournament.

Virtual Pool will keep you coming back for more and has enough options to keep it interesting. In fact, apart from the lack of beer and fags, it's almost as good as the real thing. (P)

ALTERNATIVES



JIMMY WHITE'S WHIRLWIND SNOOKER
Hit Squad • £12.99 • NR
Top green baize action.



ARCHER MACLEAN'S POOL
Virgin • £34.99 • 90% PA
More top green baize action!



THE TABLE AT YOUR LOCAL
Watneys • 50p • NR
Quite astonishingly realistic.

VIRTUAL POOL

Publisher
Interplay
Tel: (01235) 821666
£39.99

Minimum System
386-SX40, 4Mb of RAM, CD-ROM drive, SVGA graphics card, mouse. Supports all major sound cards

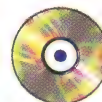
For
Extremely realistic
Superb graphics
Playability and a half

Against
Music to make you retch
Computer players are often slow

87%

Alex Dampier

Pro Hockey '95



CD REVIEW

Ice cool Keith Pullin grabs his not so jolly hockey stick.

You can't really say there's an abundance of ice hockey games on the PC, so any half decent simulation of this type stands a fair chance of success. If, however, it's as much fun to play with as a black widow spider, it's just going to send the genre further down the pan. Unfortunately, this is the situation with *Alex Dampier Pro Hockey*. From the moment the brief introduction appears, with its pathetic attempt at creating an atmosphere, you can just sense the mediocrity.

Who the hell is Alex Dampier anyway, it's not exactly a name that slides off the tongue. At least most people have heard of sporting personalities such as John Madden, Nigel Mansell and George Foreman. I don't think the average British gamer is going to have the slightest clue about this guy.

If you're American though, you'll probably immediately know who this shady chap is and accordingly lap up the endless series of menus that offer screen after screen of statistics.



The crowd seem to have wandered in from a Paris catwalk. God knows where the players came from, it wasn't hockey school.

Although the one thing I couldn't quite understand is that even with 27 different nationalities and 3,200 different players, each team is exactly the same to start with. The only way to vary the teams' skills is to select a team and then win a few matches, which gives you bonus skill points. These can then be added to a few players' attributes, such as speed, technique, aggression and stamina.

Once you've done that you can then change the control of that team to computer and select another as the human player; keep doing that and you can have some nations that have a wide range of abilities. But that's a pathetic artificial process of injecting variation into a game, which by rights should already be present. In the end it's easier to play two player matches all the time, there's more fun to be had playing against a friend who's equally as flummoxed with the control method.

Return of the CBM64

There are a lot of questions to be asked about the visuals too, the graphics have the badly detailed resolution of a Commodore 64. The 3-D isometric viewpoint is set at pretty much the same angle as *FIFA International Soccer*, although the players aren't as defined; in fact you can barely make out the faces in the blocks. The only time I was impressed was when the crowd were prompted into a two-frame animated frenzy when I scored, that's about as good as it gets! To be honest, the fact that I



The two teams skate on to the pitch and prepare themselves for the gruelling three periods ahead. Note the perfectly straight blue lines (!).

ICE, ICE, BABY!



Erm, well yes, the introduction begins with this picture of the goal. But where's the crowd?



Suddenly, it becomes apparent this is actually the last few seconds of the match – score's even.

ALTERNATIVES



NHL HOCKEY
Hit Squad ● £14.99 ● 67%
Has to be the best around
at the moment, very slick
and great fun.



BRETT HULL HOCKEY
Accolade ● £39.99 ● NR
Very dull and full of
boring statistics.



WINTER CHALLENGE
Hit Squad ● £12.99 ● NR
All manner of snow and
ice antics.

scored was even more remarkable, considering the appalling method that must be mastered in order to get in a reasonable shot in the first place.

The system is as follows: hold button and then turn left or right in increments of 45° to rotate the player into a shooting position. If you've played *NHL Hockey* you

From the moment the brief introduction appears, you can just sense the mediocrity...

may think it sounds similar to that, but in practice that system blows this one away when it comes to fluidity. After playing the game for a whole day, the only way I could score was by skating straight into the goal; lin-

ing up a shot is nigh on impossible – there just isn't enough time, whether in fast or normal mode.

The lack of moves is another major lead weight on the fun factor – there's not even a proper tackle button. All you do to get the puck off the opposition is slide up beside them and look at them in a harsh manner. Most of the time this causes the action to be confined to large clumps of players, constantly bouncing the puck off each other.

Curiously, moving your player over a loose puck will cause him to ignore it totally and carry on in the direction he was previously travelling. It seems to me the only surefire way to pick up a loose puck is to try and skate away from it, that's how appallingly bad the collision detection is.

Even the token fight scenes that you find in every hockey game are of poor quality here.



The goalkeeper makes a spectacular leaping save to his right, only to be rewarded with repeated blows round the head by his own player. Friendly game this.

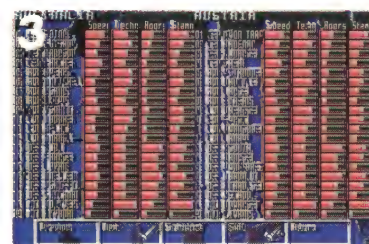


All you see are two players sticking their spindly arms out towards each other – when the fight ends they both go into the sin bin, which makes it fairly pointless to start a scrap.

Coach and horses

Eventually some gameplay can be discovered, if you go for the coaching option. Basically, if you select a tournament or league option and then change the control to 'coach', you can watch the match but have a say in what tactics and substitutions are used. As many players as there are teams can play the game this way and it's a damn sight more exciting than being bogged down with player control.

Taking into account all aspects of *Alex Dampier Pro Hockey '95*,



1 Some kind of Eastern Bloc country celebrate a goal. 2 A man pulling a stupid face, must have seen the beta version. 3 Two different teams with the same player attributes. 4 A large red sprite, possibly a player, zips along the ice towards another goal, maybe.



it has to be said that it's one of the duller and most badly programmed sports simulations I've ever played. I cannot and will not recommend this to anyone, and strongly advise ice hockey fans to go for the well priced and considerably more playable *NHL Hockey*. You've been warned. (D)



ALEX DAMPIER PRO HOCKEY '95

Publisher
Merit
Tel: (0191) 385 7755
£39.95

Minimum System
386-SX33, VGA graphics card, 4Mb RAM, double speed CD-ROM drive. Joystick essential, supports Sound Blaster (100% compatible, MPC norm)

For
Loads of teams and player statistics
Can choose to coach or play

Against
Graphics are big and blocky
Control method is appalling
Lacks atmosphere
Overrun with menus that are hard to figure out

76%



A Canadian forward ploughs through the beleaguered American defence. With the puck



stuck firmly to his stick he rounds one player and heads towards the goal, with only a few



seconds remaining he unleashes a screamer of a shot. Will it go in or will it be saved... who cares?

Geoff Spick practices his wrist action.

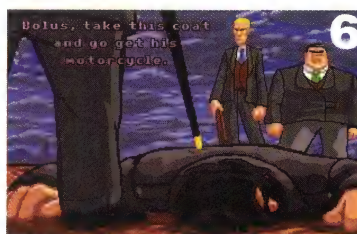
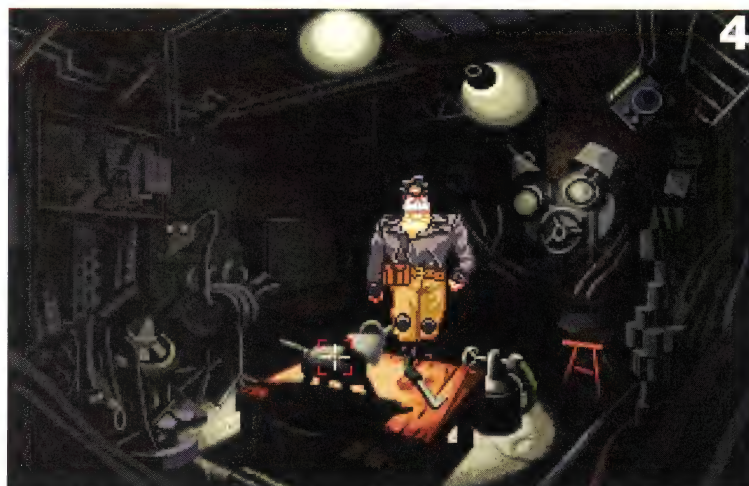


CD REVIEW

Full

A hover limousine glides effortlessly along a straight road through a desert landscape. In the back are two grey-suited figures from the Corley Motors Company; the elderly owner, Mr Corley, and Ripberger, an executive with his sights firmly set on promotion. Behind them, a gang of bikers loom into view and close on the car. As the two-wheeled monsters roar by, the lead biker rides his machine over the top of the luxury vehicle, destroying the hood ornament. For some reason, this anti-social act appeals to Corley and when they catch up with the bikers at their local haunt, The Kickstand, he chats with these ruthless individuals and their leader, Ben. After some discussion, Ben eventually gets knocked out by Ripberger's henchmen and the other bikers ride off into some sort of trap devised by Ripberger.

So ends the intro scene and your adventure begins, with Ben regaining consciousness in the dark and smelly confines of a dumpster. Luckily for sensitive gamers, this potentially gross scene is viewed externally and a quick punch to the lid allows you to emerge into the hot desert air. Your first task is to find the keys to your bike so you can warn your gang of Ripberger's hostile intentions. With only one other character in this section of the



1 Ben has a snappy one-liner ready for any occasion. "Who are you?" - it's a corker! 2 Bunny! Ball-ball! 3 The icon control system in all its tattooed glory. The skull lets you look and talk, the hand enables you to pick things up, and the boot... well, it's there so you can kick stuff. 4 All sorts of gloriously oily bike bits await Ben's attention. 5 This game doesn't portray bikers as grubby violent thugs. At all. 6 Ouch!

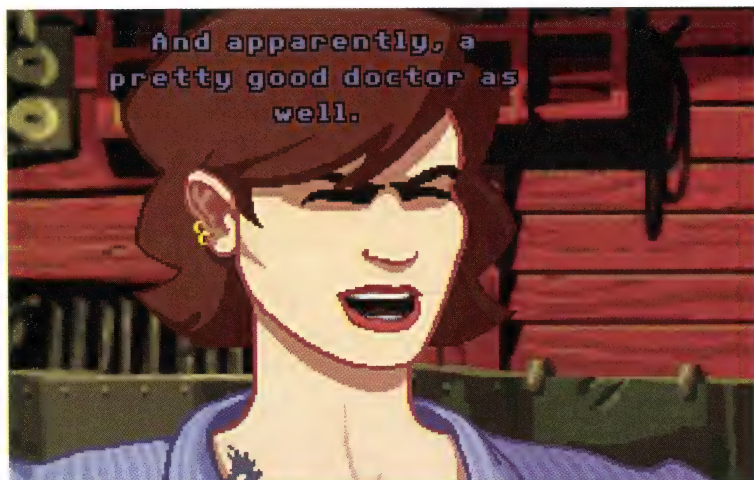
adventure, finding the keys is not a particularly difficult task, but it gives you a chance to get used to the neat interface and method of interaction. *Full Throttle's* interface is remarkably simple: A mouse-controlled crosshair highlights any interesting features, and a click of the button results

in the appearance of a tattoo, which is your action selector. It features a hand for manipulating or picking up items, a boot for kicking things, and a skull with eye sockets to look and the jaw bone to talk. The inventory is displayed by clicking on a vacant area of the screen - you simply

Throttle

REVIEW

FULL THROTTLE



He-llllo! This foxy chick in overalls is Maureen, mechanic extraordinaire, who helps to fix Ben's sabotaged bike.

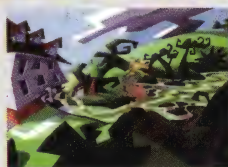
highlight an object to select it and click on the whatever you wish to use it on. The only other key you need is F1 for the menu which handles load, save and quit.

Before beginning the adventure proper, there is an arcade section to negotiate whereby you take on a rival biker in a fist fight whilst simultaneously racing down the road. This is quite an easy task and can be mastered after a couple of tries. It is little more than an impressive distraction from the game and when

you eventually leave his wreckage strewn down the road you ride into a cut scene that culminates in you waking in the bed of a young woman.

Unfortunately, you're only there for medical reasons and your bike isn't much healthier either. The objective of this section is to find some gasoline and a new set of front forks, as well as a blowtorch for your new mechanic friend, Maureen. With only four explorable locations, this doesn't sound too hard but there are a few cunning puzzles

ALTERNATIVES



DAY OF THE TENTACLE
US Gold ● £39.99 ● 95% PA
LucasArts. Silliness. Brilliance.



WOODRUFF...
Sierra ● £39.99 ● 87%
Apparently the rest of the name means something rude in German. Hmmm.



SAM & MAX HIT THE ROAD
US Gold ● £39.99 ● 83%
More LucasArts. More silliness. More brilliance.

between you and your objectives. The most entertaining problem in this section involves the world's most savage guard dog, who lives in the junkyard. No matter how hard you try, you can't even squash him by dropping cars from a great height with the aid of an electro-magnetic crane. Once you've patched up your bike, you can head off on the open road to catch up with the other members of your gang, the aptly-named Polecats (have you ever smelt a polecat?)

The next cut scene involves a grizzly demise, incriminating photographs of the act, a kidnap, and more problems for Ben. The adventure continues with Ben on the wrong side of a police road-

block back at The Kickstand. Again the exploration is limited and the fairly obvious solution rapidly leads to another cut scene. More puzzles and hazards follow, and there is also a crime to solve.

In general, *Full Throttle* is a good LucasArts adventure that has a lot to offer. Unfortunately their SCUMM system is getting a bit long in the tooth and while *Full Throttle* is certainly fun to play, it seems to be rather more linear, or at the very least more compartmentalised than past LucasArts adventures. This may not appeal to adventurers who like to travel around the game world solving tasks in the order of their own choice. However, *Full Throttle* is a superb example of the genre, with graphics and sound to match even the best Disney efforts. The greatest thing since *Day of the Tentacle*. (1)



FULL THROTTLE

Publisher
Virgin/LucasArts
Tel: (0181) 960 2255
£44.99

Minimum System
386 (486 recommended), CD-ROM drive, VGA, mouse. Supports all major sound cards

For
A fun adventure
Great lead character
Good puzzles
Entertaining storyline

Against
Too many cut scenes
Graphics look a little aged

88%

47

PC POWER JULY 1995

Chaos Control

Keith Pullin
brings order to
the galaxy.



CD REVIEW

Once again the incredible linear game invasion has taken over the office. *Chaos Control* is an even finer example than *Cyberia* of limited gameplay and imagination on a game spooled straight from CD. The actual story line is passable, if a little Seventies sci-fi. The year is 2050; an alien race, known as the Kesh Rhan, have intercepted the Pioneer 10 satellite deep in space. Using co-ordinates broadcast from the probe, they launch an all-out assault on our home planet. Shades of *Battlestar Galactica* or *Star Trek* coming through there, still, it all adds up to a very respectable introduction.

As Commander Jessica Darkwing, you fly through a series of linear levels, similar in style to *Starblade*. Pressing the left mouse button causes a small burst of what sounds like machine gun fire, but is actually a laser blast, emitted from the nose of your fighter. Pressing the right mouse button does the same. Nothing else happens. No missiles, no power-ups, no nothing. Now this is fine for people whose only working appendage happens to be their forefinger, but I like to challenge the brain a bit more myself.

Control freak

Chaos Control is split into four sections; the first puts you in control of a fighter as you cleanse the streets of Manhattan from Kesh Rhan attack vehicles such as anti-gravity speeders, atmospheric fighters and Kesh Rhan battle bots. The second part places you in a virtual world where you must overcome a deadly Kesh Rhan computer virus. After that, you pilot the prototype of an exceptionally

powerful fighter into space to battle the bulk of the fleet there. Finally, you must confront the Kesh Rhan mother ship and destroy it.

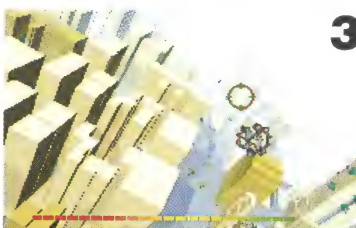
The quality of the programming gives me the impression that even though this is a conversion of the Phillips CDi game, the staff were rushed to get it finished. One reason for this is the way the enemies are merely masked by an animated explosion sprite when shot, instead of plummeting to the ground in a shower of debris. At one point I even destroyed a submarine as its conning tower was coming out of the water, only to see it continue to surface and carry on along a predetermined route. What a load of tosh!

A tediously computerised French accent accompanies you for the entire journey too, uttering self-evident phrases such as "fire", "good shot" and "red alert." A huge energy bar along the bottom left of the screen shows you when you're about to die – there's no need to rub it in!

In truth, *Chaos Control* is too easy, the first few goes are pretty challenging but the option to continue from the start of the last section you reached means that you'll complete it in a couple of days at most. That's really not good enough, especially when the graphics, while good, lack



1 Remember the Master Control Program's fortress at the end of *Tron*? So do the programmers of *Chaos Control*. 2 That's you, on the right. You're a babe! 3 "Up above the streets and houses, Rambo flying high..." Not exactly a fairytale of New York. 4 One level sees you miniaturised and flying over a circuit board. Presumably it's a Pentium motherboard and you're fixing the bugs. 5 If only it was in realtime...



the polished texture mapping of other 3-D shoot-'em-ups like *Descent* or *Magic Carpet*.

Incredibly restrictive in terms of gameplay, *Chaos Control* is a game for beginners, and that's being kind. For forty quid I would expect a little bit more excitement than pressing a left mouse button half a million times. (D)

ALTERNATIVES



CYBERIA
Interplay • £49.99 • 71%
Ditchwaterular mix of CD-spoiled blasting and tedious adventuring.



NOVASTORM
Psygnosis • £44.99 • 82%
Sequel of sorts to *Microcosm*; just as dull as the original.



CREATURE SHOCK
Virgin • £49.99 • 79%
Better than most of its CD-spoiled genre.

CHAOS CONTROL

Publisher
Infogrames
Tel: (0171) 738 8199
£39.99

Minimum System
486-DX33, VGA graphics card, 4Mb Ram, MS-DOS 5.0 or higher, double speed CD-ROM drive, mouse. Supports SoundBlaster (100% compatible, MPC norm)

For
Some sound effects are good
Informative and well made intro

Against
Graphics are too boring
Glaring lack of gameplay
Speech sucks
Poor programming

55%

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The Mother of all Bulletin Boards

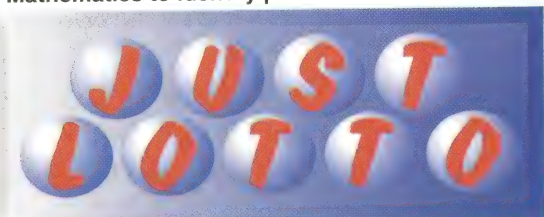
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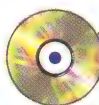
£14.99



Programs require MS-Windows 3.1, 2MB RAM.
Dept:PW 24 Guildford St. Luton LU1 2NR
Telephone: 0582 488121 (24hrs)



ACES



CD REVIEW

The Complete Collector's Edition

Steve Hill, our very own Ace, reaches for the sky, resisting the temptation to mention Douglas 'no legs' Bader.



An A-10 dives in for an attack on an evil communist bridge. Eat uranium-tipped death, you Marxist scum! Die!



Ooh, Mr Grimsdale, Mr Grimsdale. A familiar face at the airbase.

You lucky people! The *Aces* collection offers four flight simulators for the price of one. Whether dogfighting with German Fokkers (ho, ho) or blowing up Iraqi tanks, *Aces* has something for you. Well, sort of. The idea of bundling four different games is a good one; where *Aces* falls down is in the definition of the word 'different.' In fact, the words "indistinguishable", "totally", "each other" and "from" spring to mind, but not necessarily in that order. All four sims employ the same graphics engine, the same colour scheme, even the same type of menu and intro. What's the

point? Obviously, the point is to encourage hapless punters to dig deep in the belief that they're getting value for money.

So what do you actually get for

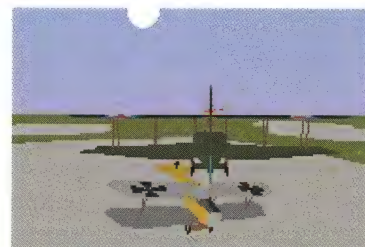
Just remember that Kamikaze is not where that bird off Street Fighter goes to perform her ablutions...

your hard-earned 40 nicker? From the murky days of 1989 comes *A-10 Tank Killer*, which if

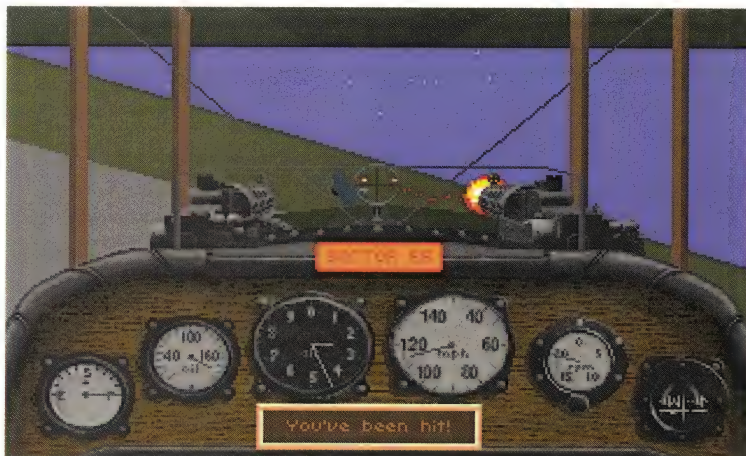
nothing else, serves to prove how much PC games have improved. Graphically, at first glance it could be mistaken for a ZX Spectrum game, and the resemblance doesn't end there, with the motion bringing back memories of the classic driving game, *Chequered Flag*.

Things don't get much better aurally either, with each burst of gunfire sounding not unlike some particularly heavy rainfall. The version on this package is based on Operation Desert Storm and includes seven all new Persian Gulf scenarios, although one piece of green or blue looks much the same as another. *A-10* really is a museum piece and should be consigned to one.

Chronologically, next up in this veritable box of delights is *Red Baron* from 1990, which predictably takes you back to the dawn of the First World War. This is slightly more interesting than its predecessor in that it allows you to engage in close-range dogfights, shoot down Zeppelins, escort bombers and go on night missions. You can also have one-to-one face-offs with a variety of ariel aces, including the big RB himself. These usually involve swooping around the sky in a cabbage crate looking for your foe, before realising that he's snuck up behind you and blown your wings off! Also included is a mission builder, allowing selection of various factors such as weather, type of plane, and skill of oppo-



Viewing your Sopwith Camel, apparently. If it's being viewed from the Red Baron's cockpit, you are in deep, deep ter-rubble.



ALTERNATIVES



WINGS OF GLORY

EA/Origin ● £39.99 ● 89%
WW1 biplane action against the Hun.



FIGHTER WING

Merit ● £39.99 ● 69%
All manner of modern-day death machines, which somehow fail to excite.



US NAVY FIGHTERS

EA ● £44.99 ● 96%PA
Haven't you bought this yet, Pentium owners?

nents. *Red Baron* is admittedly a vast improvement on *A-10*, but it's hardly *US Navy Fighters*.

Following *Red Baron*, the obvious move was to make a World War II sim, and *Aces of the Pacific* is just that, centring on all things Pearl Harbourular. You can take on the might of the Japanese naval fleet, or even fly for their side, as long as you understand that Kamikaze is not where that bird off *Streetfighter* goes to perform her ablutions. *Aces of the Pacific* features all manner of bombers, enemy carriers and other such symptoms



of a nation dining at the restaurant of death. There are several campaigns to take part in, spanning from 1941 to 1945, and over 25 meticulously researched aircraft. Also included is WWII 1946, a hypothetical scenario allegedly based on extensive research of historical docu-



"Who do you think you are kidding, Mr Hitler..." Stupid boy.



Neeooooowww! Dagga-dagga-dagga! Die, sinister Jap! Oh no! I've been shot! (Come in, Steve, your dinner's getting cold - Steve's mum)

ments. It allegedly emulates what would have happened had the war not ended when it did and the USA had invaded Japan. Incidentally, had the war not ended in 1945, at least we would have been spared the recent spectacle of the haggard Vera Lynn warbling 'Songs that Won the War'. Yeah, of course they did Vera, it was nothing to do with planes or tanks or dead people, it was packing up your troubles in your old kit bag that made the real difference. Never mind the fact that your family's entrails are spread around the pile of rubble that used to be your house, smile sonny, smile!

Aces over Europe is the most recent, and probably the best of the bunch. Its graphics are a slight improvement on those of the previous three games with the addition of texture maps to the polygon engine. *AOE* is again based on the Second World War, allowing you to fly

with the RAF, the US Army Air Force or the German Luftwaffe. There are over 20 aircraft to fly, including Lightnings, Mustangs and Thunderbolts. With campaigns such as Normandy, D-Day and Battle of the Bulge, you can be eating ice cream in Berlin by tea time.

As well as the four games, the *Aces* package includes *The Aviation Pioneers Museum of Flight 1903-1939*, a Windows based multimedia guide to the early years of aviation. Categorised into Dawn of Flight, World War One and the Golden Age of Flight, it is a reasonably comprehensive look at the planes and personalities that made up that era, including photographs, film clips, narration and text. Although this is little consolation for having to play the four games, it does provide an occasionally interesting aside.

If you're a big aeroplane fan with short arms, deep pockets and a penchant for run-of-the-mill flight simulators then *Aces* could be just the card. Me, I'm off for a game of *Descent*. (P)

ACES THE COMPLETE COLLECTOR'S EDITION

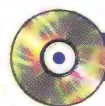
Publisher
Sierra
Tel: (01734) 303322
£39.99

Minimum System
486SX-25MHz, 4Mb RAM, CD-ROM drive, mouse. Windows for *Aviation Pioneers*

For
Four games for the price of one
Nice box

Against
Four very similar games
Basic graphics
Poor sound

69%



CD REVIEW

Keith Pullin breaks the ice with freezing Nazis and red-eyed monsters.

Prisoner of Ice

Yet another point 'n' click adventure promising an Oscar winning plot and new advances in user interaction breezes into the office and hopes to establish itself as the game of the genre. Obviously it's hard to see how *Prisoner of Ice* will succeed with a title that implies another pitiful ice hockey simulation, but when you get down to it, this sheep has a lot to offer.

Prisoner of Ice is an interesting blend of fact and fiction. Fact – in 1935 the Nazis set up a secret division of scientists in Antarctica to study the supernatural and occult; these wayward Germans were known as the Anenerbe. As a stand-alone story there wouldn't be much to shout about, but when you add inspiration from HP Lovecraft's

novel, 'The Mountains of Madness', something truly gripping is created.

You play the part of Lieutenant Ryan, a young American who suddenly finds himself in charge of a Royal Navy submarine. Without giving too much away, the Nazis and a mysterious monster inadvertently combine to create all manner of horrors and the standard quota of 'use this on that to make them work' kind of puzzles.

The joke's on you

While the basic skeleton remains the same as most other games of this type, the muscles and tissue have been made up from a combination of atmosphere building cut scenes, close-ups and sub-games. You'll never be in a situation where you're wan-



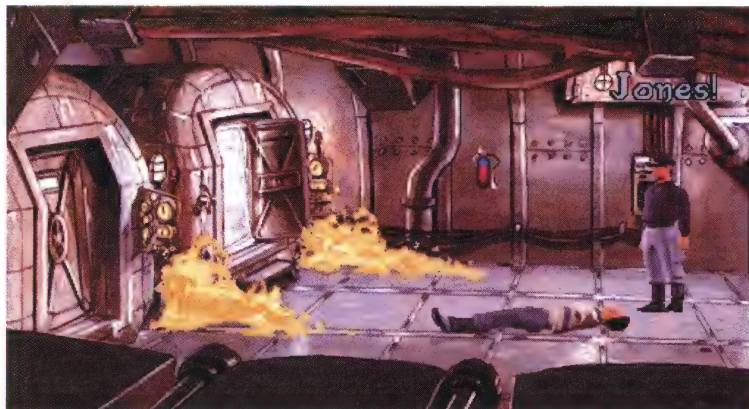
They just didn't understand that setting fire to the base, so the 'prisoner' didn't kill everyone, was the only way out. But there's no thanks from egghead!

dering from one screen to the next for hours on end. *Prisoner of Ice* has gone for the more easily digestible approach.

There are many locations, with each split into bite-size chunks. Every time there's a possibility of dying, the software will automatically save your progress in a file known as 'Joker'. That way you know when you're on the right tracks, because it will only save when you've collected everything you were meant to in that area.

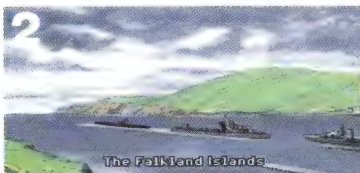
The 'meanwhile...' links also work well; you can be walking out of a room when the scene

suddenly flicks to something completely different. St Edward's base, on the Falkland Islands near the beginning of the game, houses a delirious explorer who has a nasty habit of turning into gas and disappearing into air vents. While you, as the player, see this occurring, Ryan has

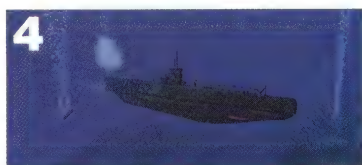


He may have the same name as a popular fictional adventurer, but he doesn't have the same luck. This poor chap has well and truly snuffed it.





1 The crew of HMS Victoria are dropping like flies! Having a desk blown into your stomach is a new way to go, though. **2** Steaming into the Falklands and not a sheep in sight. **3** It's always worth examining a Colonel's desk. **4** All kinds of attacks must be shrugged off; this one's from a German destroyer.



absolutely no idea. Effectively, it encourages you to play on in the hope of finding out what the hell is going on.

Good traditions

Traditionally, games of this kind have wildly changeable visual standards. Some, like *Sam & Max*, reduce you to tears with amusing touches and incredible

The actors have a habit of screaming innocuous sentences, then calmly saying things like "We're all going to die." Panic priorities should be sorted out...

attention to detail. Others, such as *Guilty*, do the same, but for the simple reason that the graphics are so tediously dull. *Prisoner of Ice* doesn't exactly remind you of the invaluable

importance of your eyes – the locations are incredibly drab; The Falklands, Buenos Aires, Tiahuanaco, Illsmouth and the South Pole are all miserable stops on your epic voyage.

It's a surprise to me that I didn't end up drooling mindlessly over my keyboard (makes a change – Ed). At least there are 150 settings in all and the animation of the characters isn't too bad. In fact, I'm sure Infogrames are incredibly proud of the fact that over 40 characters combine to produce 1500 animations. To be fair, it is the sort of meticulous attention to detail that Bruno Bonnell, creator of the *Alone in the Dark* series, is noted for, but it still doesn't change the fact that, even in SVGA mode, there's room for improvement.

What the graphics cannot do for the atmosphere, the sound

ALTERNATIVES



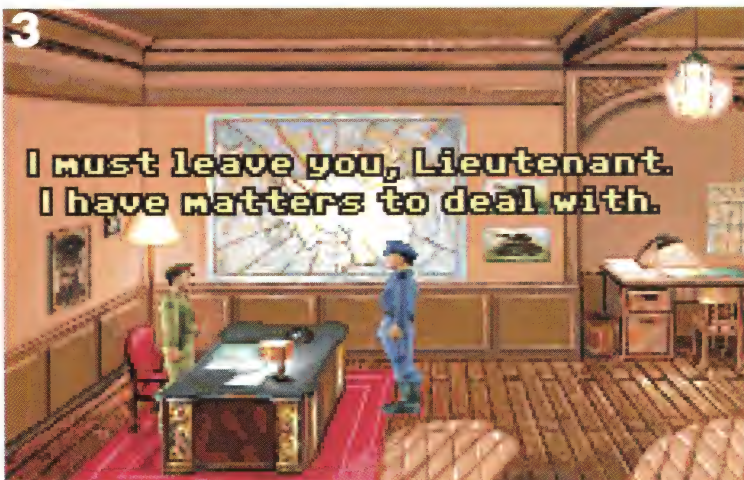
GUILTY
Psygnosis ● £34.99 ● 73%
Moody sci-fi yarn which is too brief and reliant upon corny innuendo.



FLIGHT OF THE AMAZON QUEEN
Renegade ● £49.99 ● 84%
A pleasant adventure full of jungle women.



INDIANA JONES & THE FATE OF ATLANTIS
Klax ● £16.99 ● 86%
The hero is back!



duly delivers. The music plays continuously and will change accordingly, depending on how tense or action-packed a given situation is. I would say this is highly impressive, if it wasn't for the fact that every point 'n' click is doing it now, so I won't.

The speech is perfectly clear, although it does suffer from poor interpretation by the actors. For some unknown reason they seem to have a habit of excitably screaming innocuous sentences such as "you can go to the bridge now!" and then calmly speaking lines like "the captain's dead, we're all going to die." Panic priorities should be sorted out there.

Prisoner of Ice easily keeps your attention, with its intriguing story line and finely tuned difficulty setting. Steaming off a photograph from an ID card using a perpetually boiling kettle to make a new pass to get past a particular guard, is the sort of brain level you'll be required to work within.

Apart from *Indiana Jones and the Fate of Atlantis*, which is now out on budget, I can't think of any better point 'n' click adventures at the moment. It could do with a bit more humour, but give it a whirl if you want plot with your puzzles. (P)

PRISONER OF ICE

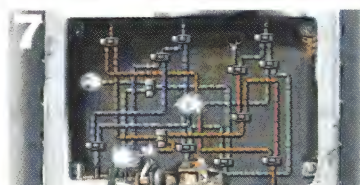
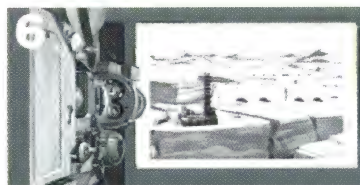
Publisher
Infogrames
Tel: (0171) 738 8199
£34.99

Minimum System
486-DX33, VGA graphics card (SVGA enhancements), 4Mb Ram, double speed CD-ROM drive. Mouse essential, supports Sound Blaster (100% compatibles) and other major sound cards

For
Another great Bruno Bonnell plot
Good use of sound creates tense atmosphere
User-friendly interface
Autosaves at logical points

Against
Some of the voices are out of place
Graphics are hardly stunning, even in SVGA
Could do with a bit more humour

84%



5 He's the one that stole my little boy's ice cream! **6** Take time out to watch a movie. **7** A dead easy sub-game.

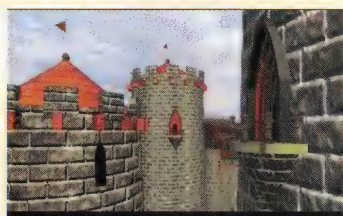
Ravenloft Stone Prophet

CAW BLIMEY!

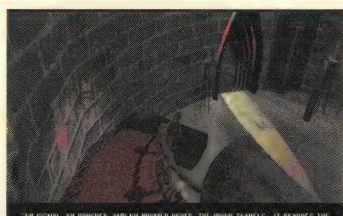


CD REVIEW

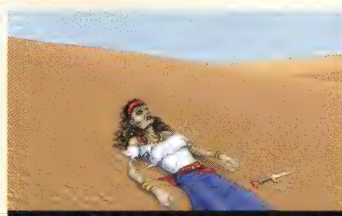
There's no sign of ravens in Keith Pullin's loft, but that's nothing to crow about.



The castle at the start; a scene of tranquillity, beauty and not a dragon in sight... For now.



Wandering down the stairs from the safety of your tower, you are told of a great evil bearing down.



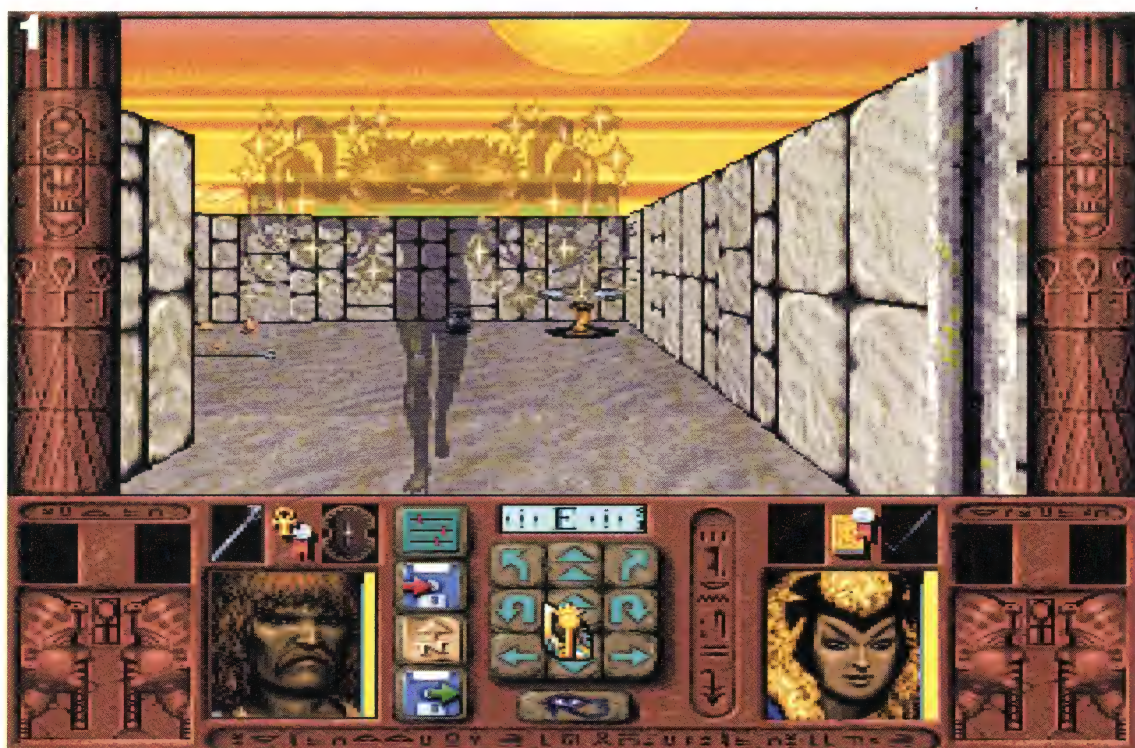
The wise old woman, manages to point you in the right direction before hyper rot sets in!

RPGs endure a certain cult status amongst the general games playing public but have a certain anorak stigma attached to them which, to be honest, is a bit of a shame. If other games contained half as much plot and gameplay as the majority of RPGs then we'd all be laughing. The only real trouble with them is that they hardly vary from one to the next and that's really what stops *Ravenloft: Stone Prophet* reaching the mind-boggling heights of gaming super stardom.

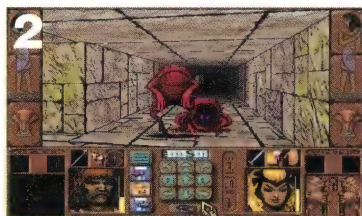
You begin your treacherous journey through the arid desert realm of Har'Akir, by paying a visit to a cackling old crone to discover what fate awaits you. In simpler terms you must choose from a bestiary containing humans, dwarves, elves, gnomes, half-elves and halflings to create two characters who can be fighters, thieves, mages, clerics, rangers, paladins or a combination of up to three, depending on their race. You can have up to four characters in total but they can be found later in the game.

'Loft insulation

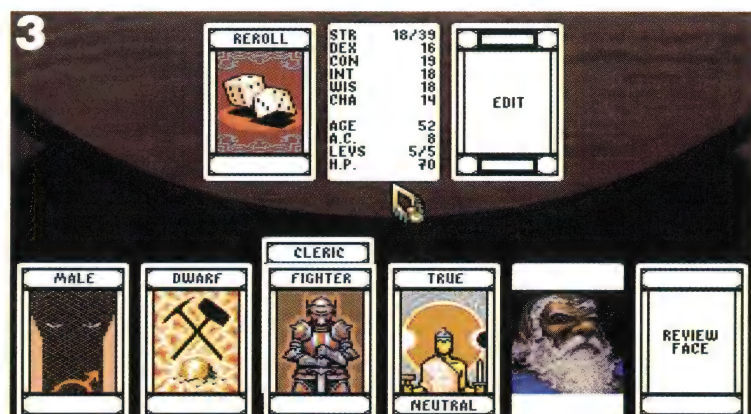
Once your dynamic duo have been baptised, it's off into the fray to find out what's going on in the world. Through a blend of reading the manual and listening to people you meet at the begin-



1 The shadows here contain more than just air. **2** Frogging hell!! **3** The highly interesting player generation screen.



ning of the game, you discover that a deadly disease has cast itself upon the land and is slowly killing off the innocent population





Stop moaning, you old bag. Another dopey civilian is lost in the Desert With Too Many Consonants And Apostrophes In Its Name.

by eating away at their flesh (quick, somebody call *The Sun*). The most likely explanation for this is the resurrection of the curiously named mummy, Anhktepót (but wait, aren't mummies dead anyway?), who is determined to wrap his contaminated bandages around the world to wreak his evil havoc on it once and for all.

The whole movement system is a free roaming 3-D environment where you can walk, run, and turn. All combat is in real-time, which means you can hit a monster once, edge back slightly and then slug it again when it's near enough. In the same way, you could find yourself totally surrounded by zombies in the middle of the desert. The only way to escape this is to rotate wildly around and hack the heads off those rotting, carrion-eating scum suckers! In general, moving around the world is very smooth, nowhere near the flowing excellence of *Doom II*, but still beautifully playable.

If that type of movement doesn't take your fancy then you can switch to the block by block



Hey, maaaaan, you look totally stoned. Stoned? Geddit? Never mind.

mode, featured in older RPGs such as *Eye of the Beholder*. Other switches include turning the sky and ground detail off, effectively reducing the whole system to an ultra-fast version of *The Bard's Tale*! While it's much easier and quicker to move around in this mode, but you will find it harder to squeeze through small gaps to escape a writhing mass of snakes, for example. It's also a bit unpleasant on the eyes, with the graphics reduced to four colour sketch drawings, rather than the effervescent glory of lightning and spectacular sunsets in standard game mode.

Totally stoned

The first task you undertake is the rescue of the poor common-

er who accidentally wandered off into the desert, fell down a well and proceeded to twist her ankle while escaping the belching advances of a giant fire-breathing frog. It's a bit hard to swallow really but that's what *Stone Prophet* is all about; unbelievable pixie tales packed full of goblins and moaning zombies.

But what's annoying about this first quest is that after chatting away to this utterly distraught villager and finally agreeing to take her back home to her village, she doesn't even tell you where she lives. It would help if she could fight, but all she does is moan that you're not taking her directly home as promised.

In the meantime you'll come across various dungeons, each containing their own particular

A deadly disease is killing the population by eating away their flesh - quick, call *The Sun*!

breed of demonic guardians, one such demon being the irritating pause while the data loads. One ancient temple contains a cat who, if spoken to using the spell 'speak to animals', will nip through a hole in the wall and collect a key for you. It's the sub-



lime that must be negotiated as well as the straightforward and only complete mastery of both fighting and puzzle solving will lead you to the end of this adventure.

Ravenloft: Stone Prophet does contain some admirable features. The point 'n' click inventory system has been smoothly implemented so time taken sorting out boring bits, like which armour to wear, has been reduced to a minimum. All the important details, like the weight and attacking/defensive value of an item, is displayed as soon as you click on it. There are even little bags and boxes for you to put items like scrolls and potions in.

Overall, *Ravenloft* falls down because there is just a bit too much wandering around, making enjoyment sporadic rather than intense. The scope is enormous with a great variety of spells and skills to master. *Ravenloft: Stone Prophet* is certainly a game for Advanced Dungeons & Dragons fans, but once again is not interesting or exciting enough for the uninitiated. (D)



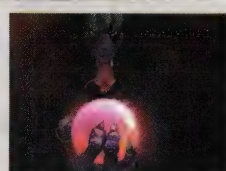
ALTERNATIVES



MENZOBERRANZAN
Mindscape • £44.99 • 86%
Stupid-of-moniker RPG in a goblin-esque vein, again fromSSI.



ISHAR 3
Daze • £39.99 • 76%
Fantasy adventures full of people with double vowels in their names.



DARK SUN
Mindscape • £49.99 • 85%
More dungeonesque stuff, this time from a top-down viewpoint.



RAVENLOFT

Publisher
SSI/Mindscape
Tel: (01444) 246333
£44.99

Minimum System
486-33, 4Mb of RAM, 1Mb VGA card,
DOS 5.0 or greater, CD-ROM drive.
Supports all major sound cards, joystick
recommended

For
Great presentation
Tons of options to tweak and change
Massive array of magic spells
Huge play area

Against
Speech is stuttery and hard to make out
Sound effects can be annoying
Tedious waiting while levels load
Soon becomes a bit repetitive

74%

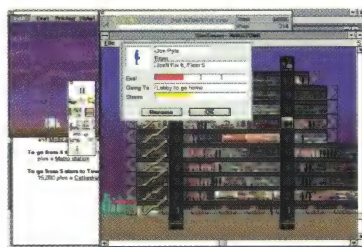
Sim City, Sim Earth, Sim Ant, Sim Island... it'll be Sim Ice Cream Van next.

There seems to be an endless market for games that place you in the role of God (or town planner, which is much the same thing), giving you total control over the lives of the teeming millions.

The latest in this parade of Sim games is *Sim Tower*, which, as the name might suggest, places you in control of (yes!) a tower block. As usual with Maxis' range, there is no set objective; the only real aim of the game is to keep going for as long as possible and see what you can create. Incentives to continue are provided by Michelin-style stars, which are awarded as the number of occupants in your tower reaches certain levels. More stars grant you more features, which bring in more people, which win you more stars... and so on.

Take me higher

You start off with \$200,000, and the first thing to do is construct a lobby, the width of which determines the maximum dimensions of your tower. If you feel restricted by this, don't worry... you can always defy the laws of architec-

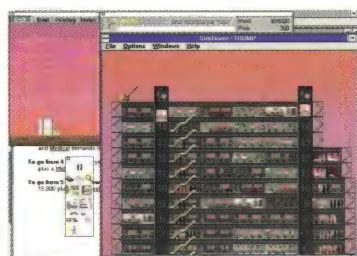


Jon off home? A likely story – he's off to the Jug of Ale, more like.

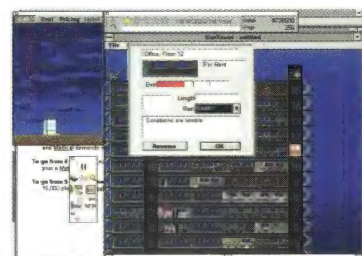
ture (and indeed logic) by extending the tower sideways whenever you feel like it. Once you have a suitable base, you can start reaching for the sky by constructing office space and... well, that's pretty much it to start with. You can also drop in apartments, but I don't know who'd want to live right next to an office (particularly our office).

Improving your star rating adds to the list of possible tenants, and soon you can plonk hotels, shops, cinemas and (bizarrely) cathedrals on top of the sweating nylon-shirted drones toiling in their offices. Once things start building up, you have to take care of your tenants by arranging decent lift services, cleaning, pest control,

security and so on, and also stop them from legging it down the road



The passage of time is indicated by a rubbish clock and some nice sunsets.



Moan, moan, moan. What's the matter? Bare concrete not good enough for you?

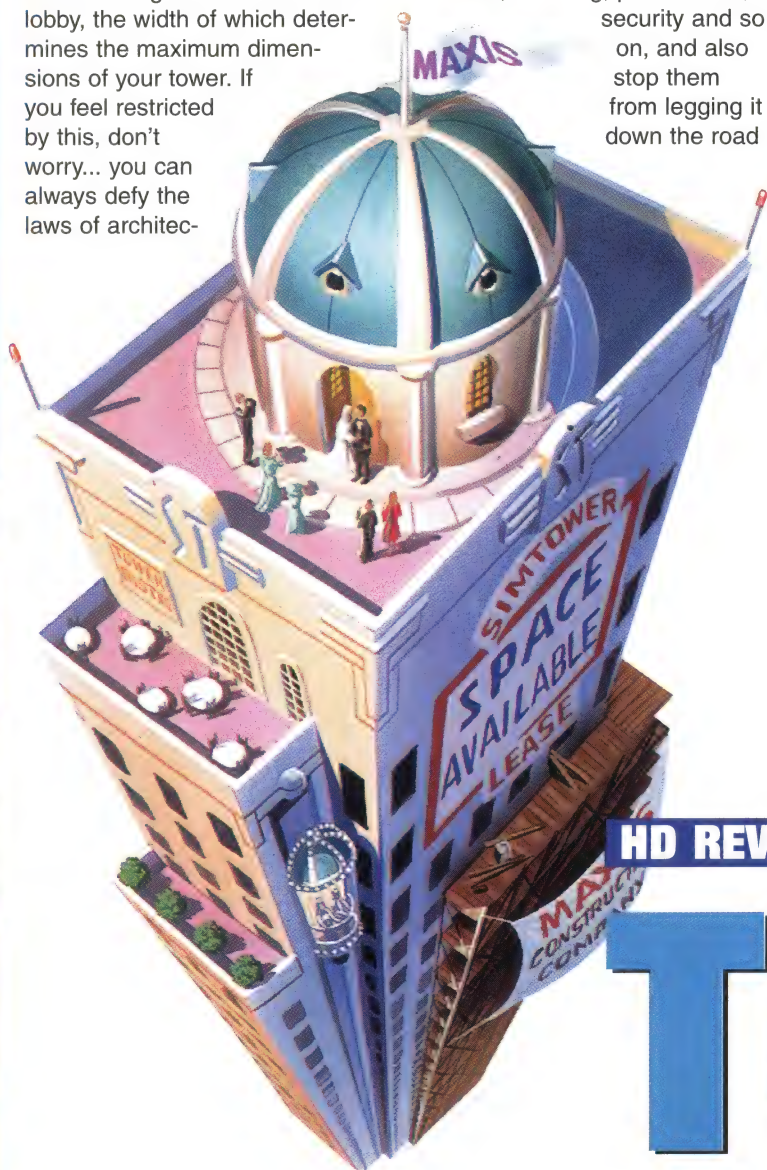
by juggling with their rents. If they're paying too little, you won't be able to afford the upkeep of the building and they'll leave in disgust at the filth and roaches. But if they're paying too much, they'll leave anyway, no matter how often Fag-ash Lil runs the Hoover round.

Empire in a state building

Fun is provided by the facility to name certain tenants, and even individual occupants of the building. As a result, the first thing I did was to try to recreate Paragon Publishing in all its gruesome detail. Here, however,

the first of many irritations and flaws crept out from behind the skirting board. No matter how huge your tower gets (up to 100 storeys if you have the cash and the inclination), you can't name more than 20 people, or businesses. 20 people is under a third of Paragon's staff, so the fun of watching everyone sneak out to the Jug of Ale is gone. The sole point of naming people, as far as *Sim Tower* is concerned, seems simply to be to colour them blue so you can track them as they go from the lobby to the lift to their office to the lift to the cafe to the lift... ZZZZ.

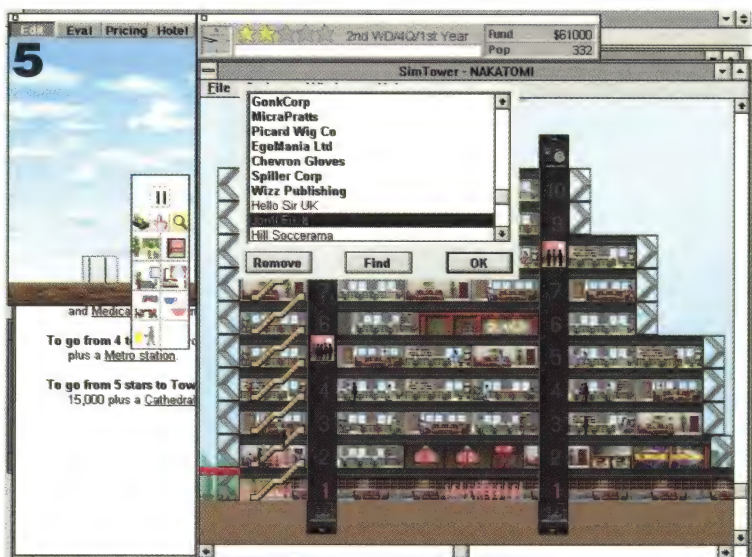
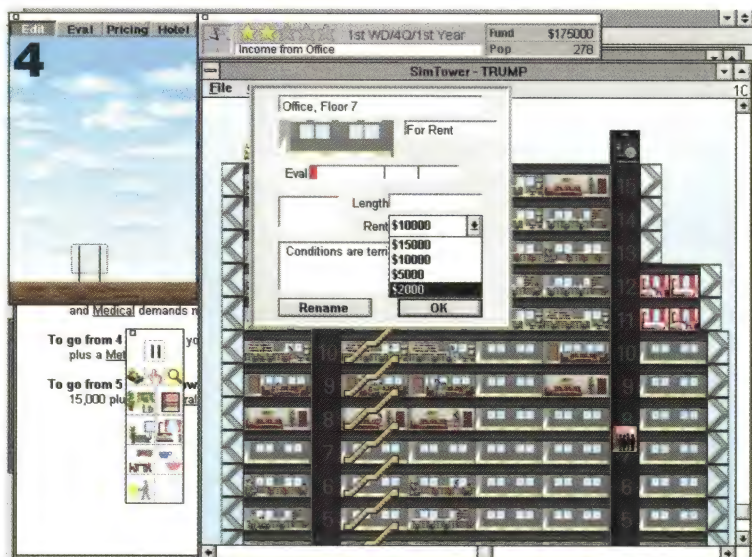
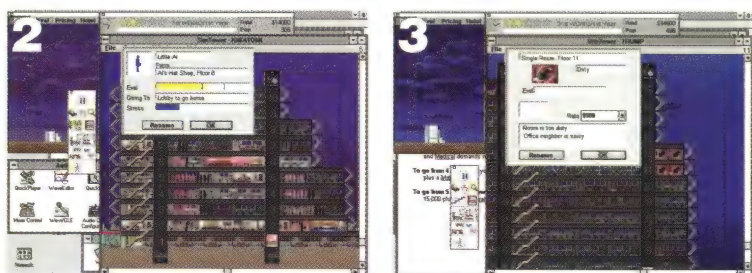
"High rise, high rise, I want to live on the ground," warbles Andy McDermott.



HD REVIEW



Sim Tower



1 Hunt down the individual occupants – well, the meagre 20 you can actually name... 2 ...and then grill them on their activities. It's a vertical police state!
3 A roach infestation in the hotel causes worry for Basil. 4 Setting the rent is easy – tenants either pay too much or not enough. 5 More fun of a nameular nature.

In fact, people seem to get fairly short shrift in general. The limit of their emotive abilities is a bar graph showing how annoyed they're getting if they're paying too much rent. *Theme Park* had no trouble in giving its denizens more complex emotional states and desires, but the occupants of *Sim Tower* might just as well be ants, for all the individuality they display.

Canary borf

The basic principles of the game are irritating, too. For a company that likes to think of itself as a modeller of real worlds in miniature, Maxis have apparently moved to Sim Weirdsville, Arizona with *Sim Tower*. Because tower blocks are so big, they have to be carefully planned from the very beginning. Make a fundamental mistake in the design of a skyscraper, and it usually works out cheaper to pull the thing down and start again from scratch than to correct the problem, as many councils and developers discovered to their cost.

Sim Tower, on the other hand, seems to believe that if you run out of room in your tower block, you can just tack a few floors onto the top of it. Or down the side. New lift shaft? Put it there, by the coffee machine. Short of parking space? No problem, just scoop out a few more levels under the foundations. Wait a minute... what foundations? And how many tower blocks do you know with *cathedrals* built into them?

As for the financial mechanics, you can either charge your tenants too little or too much. The jumps between the rent levels are far too steep – the opportunity to set prices more precisely would have been greatly appreciated. Once you run out of funds (what, no bank loans?), there is then no way to speed up time to the next financial quarter to bring the rent revenue in. Even the fast mode left me sitting grinding my teeth, watching a clock which

had clearly decided that running at a constant speed was something best left to Chris Akabussi.

Sneers tower

The biggest flaw in *Sim Tower*, however, is its... well, its *pointlessness*! Build a tower block. Wow. In *Sim City*, you're working on the macro level, dealing with big issues and the lives of millions. By contrast, *Theme Park* has you attending to the needs of the punters on an almost personal level. *Sim Tower*, however, falls in between these two interesting extremes – whatever you do in your building has no effect on the city outside, and you aren't close enough to the people to give a damn about them. Piss off a *Theme Park* customer and you have to clean up the vomit, but watching a stick-man turn red because the lift's full won't grab you in quite the same way.

What I'd like to see is something that gets even closer in than *Theme Park* – *Sim Office*, perhaps? Set up a business, bring in a load of egomaniacs and prima donnas, and watch the backstabbing commence! *Little Computer People* with a-a-attitude, to coin a phrase. *Sim Tower* isn't it, sadly. In the long run, it's about as exciting as looking at a *real* office block. (P)

SIM TOWER

Publisher
Maxis
Tel: (0171) 490 2333
£39.99

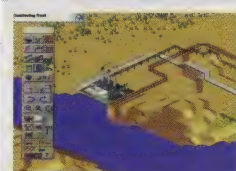
Minimum System
386-25 or higher, Super VGA, Windows 3.1 or higher, mouse. Supports all major sound cards.

For
Learn about the amazing world of lifts
Runs in Windows, if that counts as a plus

Against
Boring
Slow
Uninvolving
Unrealistic

47%

ALTERNATIVES



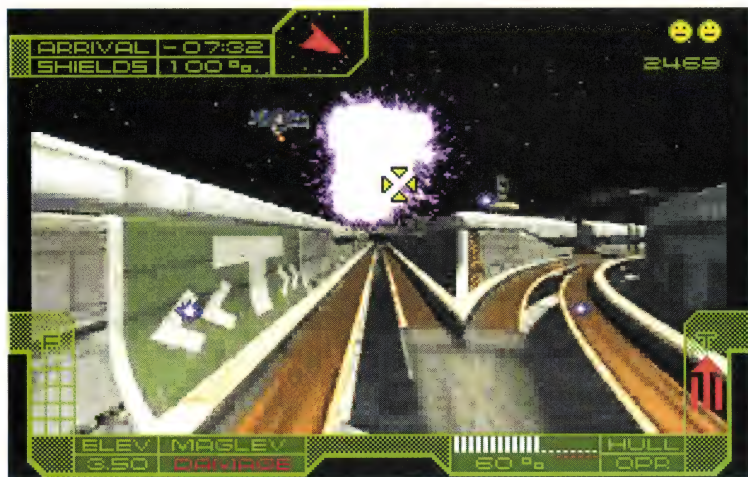
SIM CITY 2000
Maxis • £49.99 • 90% PA
Town planning on a much larger, and more entertaining, scale.



THEME PARK
Bullfrog • £44.99 • 89%
Create your own Alton Towers, then watch the punters spoil it.



TRANSPORT TYCOON
MicroProse • £44.99 • 90% PA
Excellent financial management stuff.



The big decision is left or right. The arrow at the top is telling you right, but a head-on collision could be just around the corner. But if I were you, follow the advice.

With a big budget, big name designer Ron Cobb (*Conan the Barbarian*, *Aliens*, *The Abyss* and *True Lies*) and a cameo appearance from Burt Reynolds' buddy, Ned Beatty of *Deliverance* fame, there's a fair bit of quality surrounding this production.

Loadstar is the first in a series, starring futuristic trucker, work-aniser and qualified drinker Tully 'Iron Dog' Bodine. Tully is an



The action can sometimes get a little hot for Tully, ask Niki Lauda here...

ageing trucker who's looking for that last big delivery, legal or otherwise – the load that will ensure him a pleasurable retirement.

The superb FMV introduction takes place in a *Star Wars* type bar, with crowds of bizarre revellers looking on, and superb acting that evokes a buzzing sci-fi atmosphere.

Taking place over four increasingly difficult levels, you control Tully's truck as it screams at breakneck speed down a series of monorail systems. Visually, it resembles *Sewer Shark* on the Mega-CD and 3DO, other than that it's reminiscent of a cross between CD-ROM versions of *Megarace* and *Novastorm*. You steer the vehicle by pressing left or right at an interchange and shoot the myriad of glossy alien spacecraft by hitting the left mouse button.

The entire steering and battle system is controlled using the mouse and cursor keys; it may sound a bit awkward, but it works extremely well. Forks in the track don't appear too often, so most of the time your main concern is to blast the constant stream of track police and alien pirates

Remembering the days of *Space: 1999*, Keith Pullin goes on a cargo run.

ALTERNATIVES



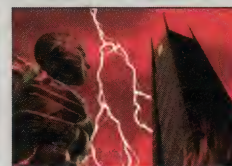
MEGARACE

Mindscape ● £39.99 ● 55%
Graphics aside, this is a dour (and indeed dire) driving shoot-'em-up.



NOVASTORM

Psygnosis ● £44.99 ● 78%
Lots of swirling enemies and a damn good blast into the bargain.



CYBERWAR

SCI ● £44.99 ● 65%
Rubbish Lawnmower Man game. Far too linear and not enough blasting.



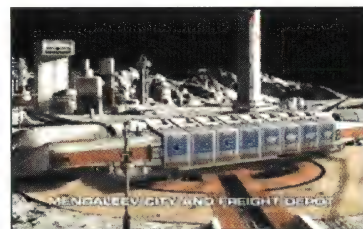
Squeal, little piggy! He sure has got a purty mouth.

intent on vaporising you and your Gerry Anderson vehicle.

Problem with aliens

I would like to have seen a few more aliens, but the few in the game are superbly rendered and visually cannot be faulted. Having only four is a bit limiting really, especially when they follow the same attack pattern every time. Luckily, the sheer number of offensive craft saves *Loadstar* from being too easy. The two difficulty levels help too, and you certainly can't accuse the easy setting of being a breeze – it took me half a day to complete the first level.

Throughout the game, the faithful computer helper offers advice so you can avoid head-on collisions with other approaching trucks. It will guide you to repair bays as well; the energy bar runs from 0 to 100 percent, when it reaches 100 your truck slides off the track in one of three highly exciting ways. But the best way to die has to be a



Seventies sci-fi series keep coming back – they will haunt us for eternity.

head-on collision. It's worth letting this happen at least once, just to watch the searing heat melt the skin off your chubby little face!

Loadstar does not let go easily, it's a brilliantly presented and highly addictive shoot-'em-up at a reasonable price – one of the best CD-spoiled shoot-'em-ups I've seen this year. Hopefully the rest of the series will be just as good. (P)

LOADSTAR

Publisher

Rocket Science
Tel: (0171) 304 4044
£34.99

Minimum System

486-SX33, VGA graphics card, 4Mb RAM, double speed CD-ROM drive. Mouse essential, supports all major sound cards

For

Fast paced shoot-'em-up action
Superb intro and presentation
Great sound effects
Not as linear as most CD spoiled games

Against

Still suffers from repetitiveness
Should be more continue points
More enemies needed for variety



CD REVIEW

81%

Loadstar

The Legend of Tully Bodine

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FEEL IT,
GO FOR IT!**

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IDE Connectivity

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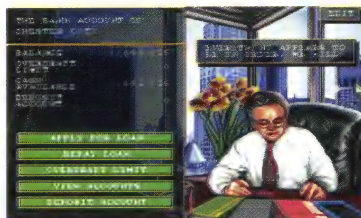
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D-Generation | 12.99 | 12.99 | 3.5" CD | Maniac Sports | 26.99 | 26.99 | 3.5" CD | Acres Of The Deep | 26.99 | 26.99 | 3.5" CD | D-Generation | 12.99 | 12.99 | 3.5" CD | Maniac Sports | 26.99 | 26.99 | 3.5" CD | AD&D Action Trilogy | 17.99 | 17.99 | 3.5" CD | D-Generation | 12.99 | 12.99 | 3.5" CD | Maniac Sports | 26.99 | 26.99 | 3.5" CD | Acres Of The Deep | 26.99 | 26.99 | 3.5" CD | D-Generation | 12.99 | 12.99 | 3.5" CD | Maniac Sports | 26.99 | 26.99 | 3.5" CD | AD&D Action Trilogy | 17.99 | 17.99 | 3.5" CD | D-Generation | 12.99 | 12.99 | 3.5" CD | Maniac Sports | 26.99 | 26.99 | 3.5" CD | Acres Of The Deep | 26.99 | 26.99 | 3.5" CD | D-Generation | 12.99 | 12.99 | 3.5" CD | Maniac Sports | 26.99 | 26.99 | 3.5" CD | AD&D Action Trilogy | 17.99 | 17.99 | 3.5" CD | D-Generation | 12.99 | 12.99 | 3.5" CD | Maniac Sports | 26.99 | 26.99 | 3.5" CD | Acres Of The Deep | 26.99 | 26.99 | 3.5" CD | D-Generation | 12.99 | 12.99 | 3.5" CD | Maniac Sports | 26.99 | 26.99 | 3.5" CD | AD&D 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Sports | 26.99 | 26.99 | 3.5" CD | AD&D Action Trilogy | 17.99 | 17.99 | 3.5" CD | D-Generation | 12.99 | 12.99 | 3.5" CD | Maniac Sports | 26.99 | 26.99 | 3.5" CD | Acres Of The Deep | 26.99 | 26.99 | 3.5" CD | D-Generation | 12.99 | 12.99 | 3.5" CD | Maniac Sports | 26.99 | 26.99 | 3.5" CD | AD&D Action Trilogy | 17.99 | 17.99 | 3.5" CD | D-Generation | 12.99 | 12.99 | 3.5" CD | Maniac Sports | 26.99 | 26.99 | 3.5" CD | Acres Of The Deep | 26.99 | 26.99 | 3.5" CD | D-Generation | 12.99 | 12.99 | 3.5" CD | Maniac Sports | 26.99 | 26.99 | 3.5" CD | AD&D Action Trilogy | 17.99 | 17.99 | 3.5" CD | D-Generation | 12.99 | 12.99 | 3.5" CD | Maniac Sports | 26.99 | 26.99 | 3.5" CD | Acres Of The Deep | 26.99 | 26.99 | 3.5" CD | D-Generation | 12.99 | 12.99 | 3.5" CD | Maniac Sports | 26.99 | 26.99 | 3.5" CD | AD&D Action Trilogy | 17.99 | 17.99 | 3.5" CD | D-Generation | 12.99 | 12.99 | 3.5" CD | Maniac Sports | 26.99 | 26.99 | 3.5" CD | Acres Of The Deep | 26.99 | 26.99 | 3.5" CD | 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After some prolonged haggling with the boy Keith over who was going to review this, I managed to bully him into submission and get my clammy palms on it. Why? For a start, it's football so by definition it must be good. Secondly, it's a management game and of every genre ever conceived, I find these the most compelling. I am the kind of sick person who used to spend sleepless nights playing *Football Director* on the Spectrum. For anyone who doesn't like football, the appeal of these games must be mystifying. But then anyone who doesn't like football has obviously got something wrong with them and should stick to flower arranging.

Productivity-wise, getting hold of *Ultimate Soccer Manager* was a mistake as I have spent a large proportion of the last two days staring unblinkingly at my monitor, mouse in hand, my communication with the outside world limited to a series of Brian Moore style guttural growls (no change there, then – Ed). It really is that kind of game, where you keep telling yourself, "Right, one more match and that's it!" until you eventually realise that it's dark and the cleaners are Hoovering round your feet.

There is far more to this game than just football though, as there is a *Sim City*-type business option which puts you in charge of all manner of peripheral money-spinners such as club shops, cafés and bars, right down to setting the price of the scarves, hats and programmes. This allows you to build your club into a multi-million pound business and fleece the general public of their hard-earned corn, which of course in no way resembles the activities of a certain North West club beginning in 'Manch' and ending in 'ester United'.



Ultimate Soccer Manager

Eat my goal! El Hill tackles the ultimate in football management.



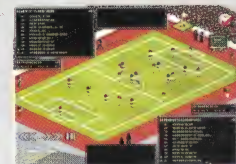
HD REVIEW



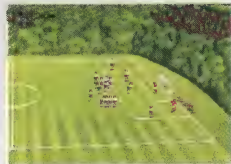
1 Tabloid journalism at its best. Reports and opinions on every match. 2 The manager's office, with a direct line to the bookies. 3 The cheerful chairman. Head slapping! 4 The Deva Stadium, Wembley of the North. Well, almost.



ALTERNATIVES



PREMIER MANAGER 3
Gremlin ● £34.99 ● 89%
One of the best management sims around.



ON THE BALL
Ascon ● £39.99 ● 86%
A highly detailed, visually impressive management game.



CHAMPIONSHIP MANAGER
Domark ● £29.99 ● 91% PA
The most realistic and factual game around.

USM allows you to manage any team in England, from the conference to the premiership and they all come with accurate player names as well as an editor to accommodate the inevitable transfers that will occur. Each player comes with a rating for such attributes as tackling, shooting, passing and pace and these can be improved by employing specialist trainers.

The host of numbers is initially confusing, but there are enough statistics to satisfy the most fervent of anoraks and there are any amount of formations to

choose from, including such bizarre incarnations as 3-1-6.

Your involvement doesn't end once you have sent your team out though, as you can bark instructions at individual players from the touchline. This is done by clicking on them with the mouse and ordering them to push up, drop back, drift left or right, or even mark a particular opponent. This level of interaction gives you a sense of achievement when your boys do the business. It also leaves you looking very silly when they get whipped 4-0.

USM also covers the seedier side of football, with options to offer bungs, rig matches and lay bets on your own team. You also have to deal with the press and regular match reports appear in the newspaper, along with advice from cheesy journalists.

There is far more to this game than I could possibly fit in here, and besides, the mighty Chester City are on the verge of promotion and I've got a crucial six-pointer to play! (P)

ULTIMATE SOCCER MANAGER

Publisher
Impressions
Tel: (0171) 372 7435
£34.99

Minimum System
386, MS-DOS 3.31, hard drive, mouse, 640k RAM

For
Football
Full interaction
Stacks of options

Against
Dangerously addictive
Simplistic graphics

89%



HD REVIEW



Youth team apprentice James Parfitt has a trial with Man United.

Manchester United The Double



After accepting a few bungs, the keeper finally deigns to let in a goal.

Match day, the players are hyped up and the crowd is roaring. This is the feeling *Manchester United The Double* gives you when you load it up – I wish. Yes folks, it's yet another United endorsed product!

You assume control of a top or bottom club and attempt to either win the championship or gain promotion to the top flight. The game starts with a lovely logo but that's about as exciting as it gets, I'm afraid, as *MUTD* is little more than a cheap attempt to cash in on the success of Manchester United. The game isn't all bad and does have one or two interesting features. It

starts by asking you whether you want to play a full season or a single game. I leapt in at the deep end with the full season but I wouldn't necessarily recommend everybody to do this as the game doesn't have very long lasting appeal. Once you have elected a single game or full season, you then go on to choose which team you wish to play as. The game is good in this respect as it includes every team from every division, not including Scotland (but then again it is supposed to be a football game). Therefore you can pick teams from the great Manchester United to the not so great Barnet FC.

Once you have chosen your club, you go on to play the game. There is a screen where you can check on the squad and the various attributes of your players, such as fitness and pace. If you feel really lucky you can try to buy Alan Shearer from Blackburn to play for Manchester United, about 10 million should lure him away.

Once you have dabbled in the transfer market to your satisfaction, picked the team you want and named the substitutes, you can actually play some football.

Yes, folks, it's yet another Manchester United endorsed product...

The graphics on the football playing part aren't exactly great though, they are too blocky and you can't change the angle of the pitch either, which is a little limiting.

"He's running towards goal, he's got a foot like a traction engine and unleashes a tremendous shot, it's heading for the top corner and... the keeper saves it comfortably." This is roughly how the first 20 or so

games went as acquiring the knack of hitting the back of the net is easier said than done, as no matter where you shoot the keeper always seems to have it covered. With no option to alter the difficulty level of the game, this does become somewhat frustrating after half a season. You do score eventually if you foul the keeper or muster a shot so powerful that it deflects in off his body. After enough practice, you may even win a game...

Following each match, you can go onto check the players' fitness and your league position and basically the game continues in this manner until you get bored of it. A reasonable effort but barely distinguishable from its predecessor, *Manchester United PLC*. (P)

ALTERNATIVES



SENSIBLE SOCCER

Renegade ● £34.99 ● 95%
The ultimate in football arcade games.



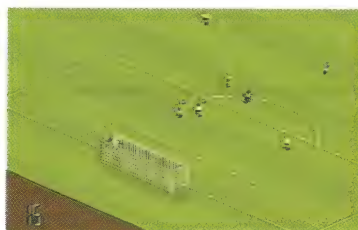
FIFA SOCCER

EA ● £39.99 ● 86%
Atmospheric Mega Drive conversion, but lacking in ball control.



MANCHESTER UNITED PLC

Krisalis ● £34.99 ● 80%
The same game with a different view of the pitch.



MANCHESTER UNITED THE DOUBLE

Publisher

Krisalis
Tel: (01709) 372290
£29.99

Minimum System

386, 4Mb RAM, VGA graphics card, mouse, DOS 3.3 or higher. Supports joystick, all major sound cards

For

Full range of teams to choose from
Reasonable strategic element

Against

Simplistic graphics
Endorsed by Manco
Little improvement on *MUPLC*
Only one difficulty level

65%

Dominus

Even though *Dominus* is a strategy game, it looks as though it's attempting to attract a younger audience with its basic *Hero Quest* (the RPG for kids) type rules and puzzles. The first puzzle, I'm sure would be beyond even Einstein; why does such a basic strategy game like this come on eight disks? It certainly hasn't got anything to do with stunning sampled sound effects or music, because this contains some of the worst sound I've ever heard on the PC!

The idea of *Dominus* is quite simple; you must protect your castle from the throng of monsters trying to get in. There are 32 different kinds, including old *Advanced Dungeons & Dragons* classics like Trolls, Troglydtes, Sea Devils, Gargoyles and many more.

The first puzzle would be beyond Einstein; why does such a basic strategy game come on eight disks?

To stop these abominations from entering your cosy little stronghold you have a small army to command, which you can strategically place around the various areas of your domain. You also have three advisors to help you out. The battle scenes take place in a poorly drawn, virtually colourless, 3-D isometric landscape, which ranges from woods and valleys outside the castle, to



Mix and match the various monsters at your disposal to create an enemy-crushing superbeast!

ALTERNATIVES



X-COM

Microprose • £34.99 • 88%
One of the best isometric strategy games on the market.



HAMMER OF THE GODS

US Gold • £29.99 • 70%
Good fantasy strategy, but has little depth.



DARK LEGIONS

SSI • £35.99 • NR
Loads of monsters and fighting. Easy and fun, too.

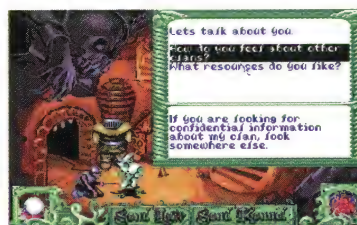
shady corridors and majestic hallways deep within your fortress. Obviously you never really want to do battle in your castle as basically it means things aren't going too well and you're probably about to die.

Red hot poker

If things are going that badly it might be worth mixing up a few spells and blasting the invaders with fireballs or flying boulders, or you could try the DIY traps which can be made from a lethal combination of rotating blades,

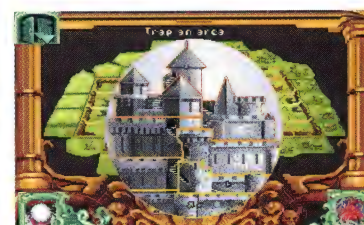
spikes and burning oil, to name some of the less harmful ones! You can even capture your foes with nets and then torture them with a red hot poker, while asking awkward questions such as, "Name? Rank? Why are you here? And do you know where the nearest take-away is?" Sometimes you can pry useful information out of them which could save your precious home, other times they say nothing and so must be dealt with accordingly (evil guttural laugh!).

My favourite part of *Dominus* has to be the way you can take up to six monsters out of your army barracks (for some reason you employ every evil monster known to man) and then mix them together to create a new super monster who's always powerful enough to be a general.



HD REVIEW

Keith Pullin tries some fantasy domination and ends up homeless.



It's wise not to do this too often though, otherwise you'll end up with no army.

After all the confusing icons have been figured out you'll find this doesn't have much pulling power and is unlikely to keep you hooked even with its seven difficulty levels. Kids might persevere, but *Dominus* is far from being the most fulfilling strategy game I've ever played. (D)

DOMINUS

Publisher

US Gold
Tel: (0121) 625 3366
HD £42.99 CD-ROM £44.99

Minimum System

386-SX20, VGA graphics card, 4Mb RAM. Mouse imperative, supports all major sound cards

For

Lots of monsters
Quite easy to get into
Spells and traps are a laugh

Against

Gameplay lacks depth and is restrictive
Awful, nay, shocking sound
Graphics are naff too

68%



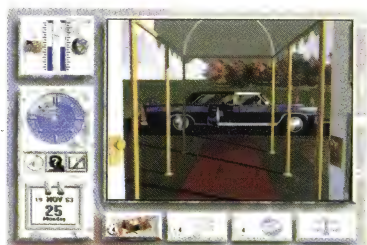
Reelect JFK

It's strange how things work out. I was once offered a job as a reviewer on a computer games magazine, which I declined in order to complete my degrees. Now, over seven years later, I'm finally making use of one of those degrees... to review a computer game! Isn't fate a funny thing?

Well, not if your name happened to be John Fitzgerald Kennedy and you were in the Dallas area on November 22, 1963. El Presidente took a trip down south to press the flesh and sample some Tex-Mex cuisine, but ended up taking home his brains, not Bar-B-Q ribs, in a doggy bag, whilst leaving a mess in the limo that Quentin Tarantino would have been proud of.

How come there isn't a 'sneak out for rumpy-pumpy with a Hollywood starlet' option?

Not surprisingly, I was curious about this game – the title, for a start, seemed rather strange. The American public might have elected the likes of Jimmy Carter and Ronald Reagan, but they were only *brain-dead*. Putting an *actual* stiff into the most powerful job on the planet would not only have resulted in the dullest inaugural address in history, but would also have left a nasty mess on the Oval Office carpet in hot weather.



Fortunately for the White House cleaners, the game turned out to be set in an alternate reality – one where JFK was only wounded in Dallas (Clint must have done his job this time). With you cast as JFK, you have to make it through the remaining year until the next election, with two goals – the first, rather obviously, being re-election, and the second being to uncover the identity of your attempted assassin(s).

Ich bien ein philanderer

Reelect JFK is a cross between an interactive movie and a point 'n' click adventure. The first half is accounted for by the political side of things, which generally revolves around three issues – Vietnam, civil rights and your re-election campaign, and the second half concerns your attempts to track down your assailants.

This gets things off to a ludicrous start – despite having the entire resources of the US government at your fingertips, you have to hunt for the would-be killers personally, like a cross between Columbo and a double-glazing telesales man. Since all the characters in the game apart from JFK and his brother Bobby are fictitious, don't expect any great insights into the real-life assassination.

Things aren't much better on the political front. You can't have any thermonuclear fun with 'the button' here; instead you have to sit through endless stretches of FMV meetings where your advisors explain events to you as if you were eight years old.

Interaction is minimal in these scenes, and often the only button you can click on is one that says 'respond', whereupon JFK states the obvious and his advisors crawl sycophantically at his insight. Yeugh!

ALTERNATIVES



THE DAEDALUS ENCOUNTER
Virgin ● £44.99 ● 87%
Rather better stab at an interactive movie.



THE PSYCHOTRON
Merit ● £49.95 ● 65%
Tosh CIAular interactive movie (horrible term) of intense dullness.



VOYEUR
Interplay ● £39.99 ● 70%
Sex, lies and murder. Just another day in politics, if you ask me!



CD REVIEW

Andy McDermott gets JFK in his sights.



Bobby Kennedy, apparently. I blame Bill Clinton, myself. When he shook JFK's hand in 1962, he injected him with radioactive bullet-attractant. Fact!

Stranger yet is the way time works in the game. Each turn represents a week, yet it only seems to be 12 hours long. At the end of each turn, JFK gets his pipe and slippers and settles down with the TV, even if there are pressing matters of state awaiting his attention. I know the guy got shot recently, but surely he could put in a little overtime. And how come there isn't a 'sneak out for rumpy-pumpy with blonde Hollywood starlet' option? This is Kennedy, after all.

Reelect JFK is an interesting idea, let down by tedious and uninvolved gameplay and crass Kennedy worship. Kennedy was actually a fairly mediocre politician who was blessed with immense wealth and skill with soundbites (the first modern

president, in fact), and the irony is that if he hadn't been assassinated, none of the Kennedy-style 'Great Society' policies eventually implemented by Lyndon Johnson would have got through Congress. This unpalatable truth is practically ignored here, replaced with simplistic politics and dubious revisionist history. What's next? *Whitewash Watergate?* (P)

REELECT JFK

Publisher
Compton New Media
Tel: Gem Distribution, (01279) 822822
£34.99

Minimum System
Windows 3.1, 486-33, 4Mb RAM, double speed CD-ROM drive, VGA, mouse, QuickTime. Sound card essential; supports all major models

For
Intriguing idea

Against
Incredibly sluggish
Historically dodgy
Simplistic politics
Silly detective sections
Fictional characters damage credibility
No way to skip/speed up FMV sections
No text accompaniment to (muffled) speech

43%

*Nam fact: JFK increased the number of US 'advisors' by 800% in three years.

Jagged Alliance



CD REVIEW



HD REVIEW



Things look bleak for the bloke in the red shirt. Still, you've got to expect this kind of hassle if you play for Manchester United.

When the world has been ravaged by a deadly virus and the only antidote is made from the sap of a rare plant found exclusively on the remote island of Metavira, you've got a serious task ahead of you. But when it's under the control of the evil and traitorous Santino (I thought he was a pretty good rock guitarist myself), the only way to succeed is by flying in the best goddamn bunch of mercenaries on the planet.

You begin in the poorly adorned hut of David Bellamy lookalike super-scientist Jack

Richards and his leggy daughter Brenda. They give you a blow-by-blow account of exactly how serious the situation is.

Accordingly, you must choose the right men from a database of 60 suitable candidates, including doctors, explosive experts, hit-men and stealthy cat burglar types. Once you've got the right mix and have agreed to pay them, it's off to work you go.

The island is divided into 50 sectors. At first you command one of these, with the others under the control of Santino and his band of unscrupulous bad guys. By slowly advancing across the island, cleansing it of Santino's scum and milking the sacred sap from the trees, you can impress the world's govern-

1 Tool up your disparate set of mercenaries with the latest in jungle-busting death kit. **2** Great, if ungrammatical, advice from a local yokel. **3** A map, interestingly enough.



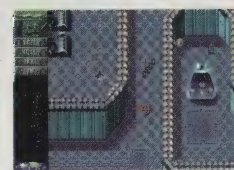
Eight ragged mercenaries are on a jagged knife edge, as Keith Pullin gets stranded in paradise.

ALTERNATIVES



X-COM

MicroProse ● £32.99 ● 88%
Rather good aquatic alien annihilation from those nice MicroProse chaps.



CANNON FODDER

Hit Squad ● £14.99 ● 94% PA
Send raw recruits to horrible fates in this superb shoot-'em-up.



DUNE 2

Hit Squad ● £14.99 ● NR
You don't even need to wade through the novel to enjoy some sandy strategy.

ments who will throw more funds your way to help with the operation.

Natural Born Killer

With the cash you're given you can hire more experienced mercenaries with better attributes. The main areas you have to look at are marksmanship, agility, health and speed – anybody who has high-flying statistics normally charges you extortionate amounts for their services, but it's worth hiring quality workers rather than the bunch of no-hopers you begin with, who can barely shoot a melon from six paces with a 12-bore.

The graphics are exceptionally tiny, however they still manage to include a fair amount of detail, like the bathrooms that contain wash basins and toilets. The sound too is superb, with every character in the game having their own voice. They even sound worried when the action

gets lively and you can almost hear the tension in their voices as the bullets ricochet off the surrounding trees.

The main problem with *Jagged Alliance* is the amount of time it takes to get into it, and when you do, the action is too repetitive to call exciting and won't keep you riveted like *Cannon Fodder* which mixes both strategy and action perfectly. Still, the story line and atmosphere just about keep it alive although this is definitely a game for the true strategy enthusiast. (P)

JAGGED ALLIANCE

Publisher

Mindscape
Tel: (01444) 246333
£39.99 HD and CD-ROM

Minimum System

386-SX20, VGA graphics card, 4Mb RAM, MS-DOS 5.0, CD-ROM drive, mouse. Supports all major sound cards

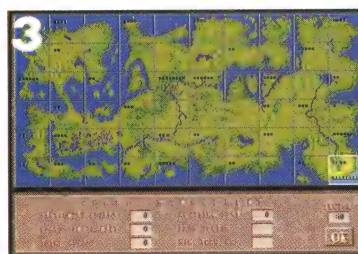
For

Highly atmospheric
Clear, well placed speech
Massive play area

Against

Takes a while to get into
Will only appeal to fans of this genre
Graphics are pretty slack

67%



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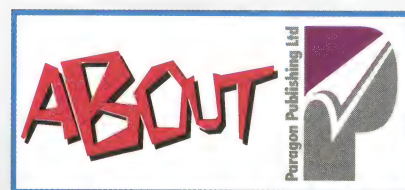
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3DO Magazine,
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Football Heroes



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Football Glory



CD REVIEW

Keith heads for glory with a bit of shirt Pullin along the way.

According to the programmers, they had never set eyes on *Sensible Soccer* before they made *Football Glory*. That may be so, but this overhead soccer game is identical in almost every respect.

The players are tiny and look like little ants scurrying around a green table top, but where the players in *Sensible Soccer* possessed intelligence and somehow instinctively knew when to make the correct runs into the box, the players in this are so dim-witted they hardly even know where the ball is. As for the goalkeepers, well, they just prefer to dive in the opposite direction!

Match atmosphere is highly charged, with the commentator constantly jabbering and the



crowd chanting, singing and cheering. Unfortunately the speech is so far behind the action, you could be up the other end of the pitch defending when you finally hear the commentator's excited howls of delight as your shot hits the post!

Special events such as stray dogs and riot police also feature in *Football Glory*. I know it adds a certain unexpected element to the game, but there's nothing more annoying than sprinting towards goal in surge mode (an extra fast mode which takes you sailing past all the other players) only for the ref to blow up and stop the action because a female stalker has pranced onto the pitch.

In fact *Football Glory* is packed full of stupid little sequences. Sometimes players will argue with the ref, with little speech bubbles coming out of their mouths. There are even pre-match interviews with the captain of one of the teams, but most of the time he's more interested in talking about anything



The Mexican forwards turn jury, as the Argentine defender tries to plead his case with the referee. Luckily it doesn't look as though he'll get away with it this time.

other than the match. Very strange.

We're in Europe!

But if there's one thing *Football Glory* has a lot of, it's options. Choosing from national or club teams, you can select the World Cup, European Championships, Champions League and many more including full league fixtures for most of the teams in Europe, not a bad choice for the football connoisseur.

The main reason why this isn't as good as it could be is surprisingly down to the small niggly details. For example, if you're playing in a league or cup competition there's no reason why the team should revert back to default after each match, especially when you've gone to the effort to set the team up how you want it. You have to keep selecting the joystick as well – there's nothing more annoying than getting to the final of a tournament and then realising the control is at its default keyboard setting because in the excitement you

forgot to change it.

I'm also unhappy with the way the players' abilities are different every time you load the game up. I know players naturally come in and out of form, but I find it hard to believe a player can light up a stadium one day and then the next day be tripping over his laces. There really should be more consistency than that.

Football Glory is fun to play, but there are just too many irritating shortcomings to make it a classic. *Sensible Soccer* is still the best for me, and just goes to show that copying a good idea doesn't necessarily guarantee success. (P)

FOOTBALL GLORY

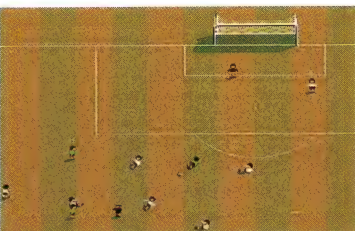
Publisher
Kompakt UK Ltd
Tel: (01438) 840004
£34.99

Minimum System
386-DX33, VGA graphics card, 4Mb Ram, MS-DOS 5.0, double speed CD-ROM drive. Mouse highly recommended, supports all major sound cards

For
Good range of options
Plays well

Against
Graphics are tiny
Players are a bit thick
Hard to get the hang of

63%



ALTERNATIVES



SENSIBLE SOCCER
Renegade • £34.99 • NR
The best arcade football game around!



FIFA SOCCER
EA • £39.99 • 86%
Great presentation and sound, but lacking in gameplay.



MANCHESTER UNITED
Chrysalis • £29.99 • 80%
Almost as good as Sensible, but not quite.



One of the players gives us an idea of his technical knowledge of the game.



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Previews

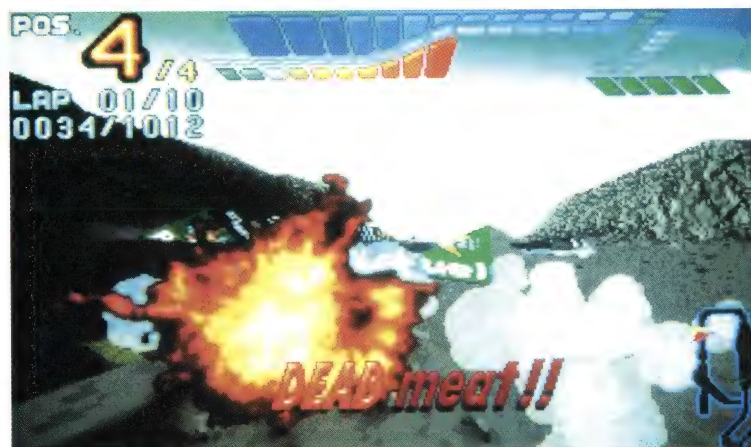
High Octane

Bullfrog • (01483) 579399
• June • CD

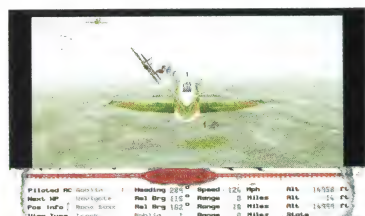
21st century *Out Run* with guns is the best way to describe *High Octane*. We're not talking pistol-out-the-window though, what we're dealing with here is rocket launchers and chain guns. At last you can treat Volvo drivers with the kind of blatant disregard they deal out to everyone else!

Your armour-plated car can go any way through the tight city

streets, mountains and deserts. Pedestrians can also be undeserving targets for your aggression. But when it comes to the 12 player link-up game, use your ammunition wisely. You may find yourself smoking in a ditch, while the others cruise to the finishing line. *High Octane* looks set to fuel inject the driving game genre – should be a good summer!



Automotive carnage – must be a Bank Holiday.



Sounds like your basic flight sim, does it not? Well, Mindscape could have pulled a rabbit out of the bag with this because it's not what you'd expect. The idea is to take over a continent known as Karanthia by flying massive airships (you know, the Hindenberg type) around the skies, launching small fighters from them and destroying everything that gets in your path.

The first person perspective flying sections contain some glorious aircraft ranging from old World War 1 style bi-planes, to incredible Stealth Bombers. The wide range of missions encompasses dogfights and bombing missions, and a good many more.

Air Power

Mindscape • (01444) 246333 • September • HD/CD

On top of all this there's a neat little diplomacy section, where you try to convince towns officials that instead of blowing them up they could do a lot worse than bowing to your superior mind and becoming part of your glorious empire. *Air Power* will be out in September so there's still a while to wait yet.



Like your jacket, mate. False!



| | | | | | | | |
|------------|-----------|---------|-----|-------|---------|-------|----------|
| Piloted AC | Delta | Heading | 44 | Speed | 115 Mph | Alt | 15246 ft |
| Next WP | Navigate | Rel Brg | 307 | Range | 0 Miles | Alt | 15 ft |
| Pos Info | Home Base | Rel Brg | 46 | Range | 8 Miles | Alt | 14999 ft |
| View Type | Track | Delta | 1 | Range | 0 Miles | State | |

The main window automatically resizes to keep the game's speed up when there is a lot going on. Fiendishly clever, if slightly offputting.

Striker '95

Time Warner Interactive • (0171) 391 4300
August • CD



With the football season now well and truly dormant for another couple of months, *Striker '95* should rekindle your soccer interest. Many improvements have been made to the system including some graphical changes that should make life easier for the player.

A massive link-up system is also being devised at the moment, so eventually we could end up with something rather special. It will have to be too, if it's going to run head-to-head with *Actua Soccer*.

Lemmings 3-D

Psygnosis • (0151) 709 5755 • September • CD

Fairly self-explanatory really. It's *Lemmings*, and it's in 3-D. You must attempt to guide these less than intelligent creatures away from their self-induced plight and are given a variety of tools with which to do so, including bombs and trampolines. You assign skills to certain lemmings in an attempt to stop the hapless green-haired potential suicide victims plodding inexorably towards their fate. All of the original skills are there plus a very important new one, 90° turners, which are able to direct the Lemmings within the 3-D environment. There are an array of camera angles from which to watch the action, including a lemmings eye view, and you can spin the play area around to suit yourself. *Lemmings 3-D* will feature 100 levels, nine lemmings skills and four difficulty levels.

The original *Lemmings* is Psygnosis' most successful release to date. *Lemmings 3-D* should be hurling itself from a cliff near you toward the end of summer.



Curse their eyes, the wretched greenly-foliced pests. May they burn in hell for all eternity. I hate them! That was an announcement by the We Hate Lemmings Society.



Marine Fighters

EA • (01753) 549442 • August • CD



Arnold Schwarzenegger takes to the air in this scene from *True Lies 2*. No, not really.

EA have announced the release of this add-on disk for their classic flight sim *US Navy Fighters*. It will comprise of three new aircraft, namely the US Marine AV-8B Harrier II, the British FRS Mk2 Sea Harrier and the Russian Yak 141 'Freestyle'. Each plane will be equipped with with a vectoring nozzle, allowing it to hover like a helicopter in addition to the normal forward flight. There will also be some fairly devastating new weapons, such as the Snakeye bomb and LAU rocket pods. *Marine Fighters* contains 35 new missions, which will utilise the vectored flight feature, involving short landing strips and vectoring in forward flight. *Marine Fighters* looks like being the ultimate accessory for flight freaks everywhere.

Ultimate Doom

GT (Bastion) • (0171) 490 1323 • June • HD/CD



The prayers of all *Doom* freaks look set to be answered with the retail release of *Ultimate Doom*. This is essentially the original *Doom* game, but with an all new section, Episode IV: "Thy Flesh Consumed." This new episode contains nine expert levels which are set to make the previous 27 look like a cakewalk, with all manner of gore-filled demonular, chainsawular action.

Another bonus is the inclusion of five free hours on DWANGO, the Dial-Up Wide Area Network. This connects the player, via a modem, to thousands of other *Doom* fanatics world-wide for some tasty four-way DeathMatches.

GOTCHA!

Want to know what's coming out in the far future, with perhaps a few rumours thrown in for good measure? Well you've come to the right place, get yer viewing gear around this little lot...

What do you get if you cross a large dose of Californian weirdness with some throbbing rock music, and throw the whole ensemble into a bizarre role-playing adventure? The answer is *Total Distortion* from Mindscape. The tenuous plot involves travelling to an alternative dimension in order to create a music video, which can then be hawked around a few producers to earn fame and wealth.

Total Distortion is packed with a host of curious sub-games and numerous locations where footage for the video can be filmed. Occasional appearances are made by the Guitar Warriors, who do battle with their power chords and must be repelled with whatever guitar you can afford.

Essentially, *TD* is a pseudo multimedia authoring package intertwined with a strange adventure game, and looks to be a lot more interesting than the usual goblin frenzy. It will be out in September.

Buried in Time from US Gold is a time-travel adventure game and is the sequel to *The Journeyman Project*. As in the first game, you play the role of Temporal Security Agent #5, a time-travelling law enforcement officer.

One morning, you bump into your future self, *Bill & Ted* style, and learn that you have been framed for altering history. Naturally, you must begin sifting through time for the answers.

Buried in Time features seven interactive worlds and five different time periods, all seen from a first person perspective. The game comes on three CDs and contains more than 25,000 individually rendered frames of imagery and animation, with professional actors in full costume adding to the realism. More news next month.

Also on the way is *Lion*, the latest in the prolific genre that is wildlife role-playing simulations. Predictably enough, players assume the role of a lion as it strolls around the savannah grasslands and wooded plains of the African Serengeti. There are 20 lions to choose from, each with individual strengths and weaknesses which must be utilised to hunt, survive and thrive. From the same camp

Player Manager 2

So it hasn't taken Anco too long to get their heads together and release a sequel to *Player Manager* – only six years! Programmed by Steve Screech (the Andrew Ridgeley of the duo that brought us the original), *Player Manager 2* will feature *Match of the Day's* resident *Thunderbirds* puppet – Alan (no knees) Hansen.

Entertaining us along with the ex-Liverpool and Scotland star is the normal wodge of problems that crop up in the everyday life of your average manager. Tactics must be chosen, coaches must be hired and to add to the electric atmosphere you can even choose to play on the pitch, which is viewed from an overhead perspective. Four players can indulge in this football party and it should be on the shelves very soon.

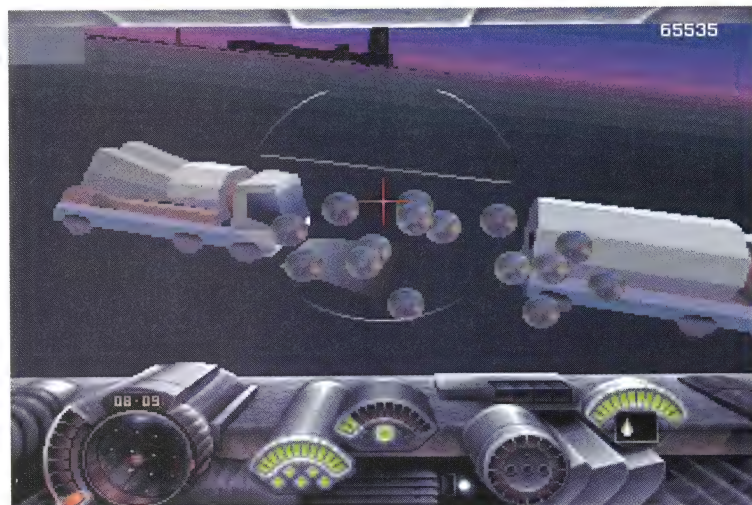
Anco • (01753) 671686 • May • HD/CD



The sacred turf.



He's got no knees, reckons our Steve.



Some rotten sod's just stolen my marble bag and tipped the contents onto my Dinky collection. Look, there's my prize dobbie.

Darker

Psygnosis • (0151) 709 5755 • August • HD/CD

The product of three years work, *Darker* is currently looking very tasty. As the pilot of a state-of-the-art Caero Fighter, you are equipped with the most sophisticated of weaponry. Hovering above Delphi City, you must attempt to penetrate the underground labyrinths whilst coming under severe enemy fire. There is a lot of low flying and dodging of buildings involved in an effort to gain a reasonable vantage point from which to retaliate.

The vector graphics are given the

full Gouraud shading and light sourcing treatment and the movement is extremely smooth, with the full 360° swoops capable of inducing motion sickness. If that isn't enough realism for you, then the CD version of *Darker* is also compatible with the VFX-1 'VR' headset. *Darker* also features auto-correction for processing power; it detects the power of PCs and adapts accordingly, adding more detail for faster machines but maintaining speed on slower PCs. Look out for it this summer.

Terminator: Future Shock

US Gold • (0121) 625 3366 • September • HD/CD

The latest instalment in the award-winning series is a fast-paced action game set in the violent future of the classic science fiction movie which launched Arnold Schwarzenegger to stardom. The machines have nearly won as the few human survivors of the nuclear holocaust band together to resist SkyNet's genocidal wrath. This is

where you come in, flying around and through the ruins of Los Angeles in a captured HK.

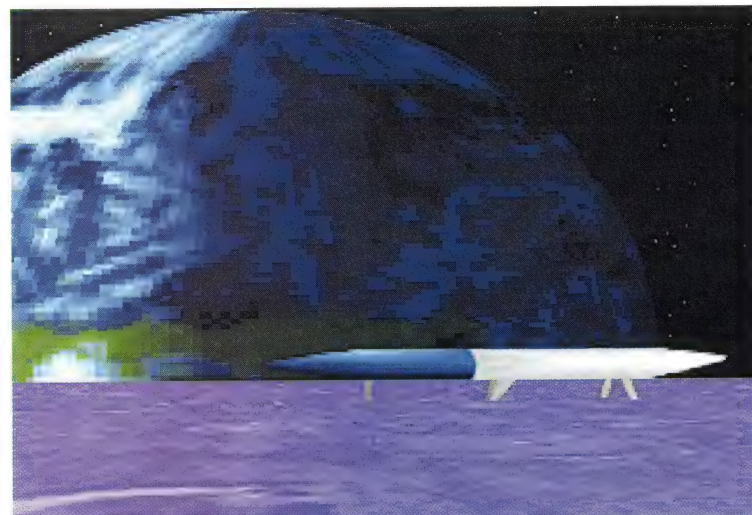
Terminator: Future Shock will utilise Xengine, a revolutionary new graphics engine integrating full 360° rotation with fully textured polygons, multiple phong shaded light sources, SVGA/VGA graphics and specialised video effects.



That Terminator's got no knees. Must be Alan Hansen again.



Keith brings some mates round for another drunken bender.



Flat Stanley lands his ship on a strange purple planet. Look, you try thinking these captions up without resorting to 'Here's a shot from *Damocles*'.

Damocles

Psygnosis • (0151) 709 5755 • June • HD/CD

The hit Amiga game – sequel to *Mercenary* – has finally been converted to PC and looks set to take full advantage of the graphic enhancements offered by the format, offering total freedom of movement in a 3-D environment. It also features a specially commissioned orchestra soundtrack with appropriate music triggered by the player's activity.

With the comet *Damocles* three hours away from impact with the planet Eris, you fly among the nine planets and 19 moons of the Gamma system, landing and explor-

ing the bases, towns and cities. Search through dozens of buildings and talk to numerous people as you attempt to prevent the rapidly approaching collision.



The Ring Cycle

This combination of gaming and opera features fully explorable texture mapped and ray-traced 3-D landscapes using the proprietary Maelstrom fractal engine. There are over 30 individual non-player characters, each with their own artificial intelligence and a sophisticated combat system allows the player to customise his or her own special moves.

Musically, *The Ring Cycle* draws from Wagner's classic opera to provide an evocative soundtrack, including the stirring resonance of *The Ride Of The Valkyries*. Thematically, it goes back further, embracing the Teutonic mythology that Wagner himself used as source material and exploring the durable Middle Earth legends and fables that storytellers like Tolkien have long looked to for inspiration.

Psygnosis • (0151) 709 5755 • June • CD



A game based on the bladder-straining magnum opus of Hitler's favourite composer? Strange but true.

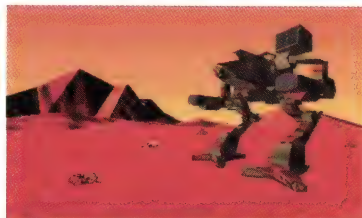
MechWarrior 2

Activision • (0181) 742 9400 • July • CD

Utilising yet more new 3-D polygon technology, this combat simulator will feature real-time perspective texture maps and vivid graphics that allow the player to explore multiple points of view. It will also include original music, high-end special effects, video footage and the option of an eight player network.

Set in the year 3058, the Clans have suffered a dishonourable defeat against the combined forces of the

Inner Sphere in the Battle of Tukayyid. This bitter loss leads to fierce infighting amongst the Clans, in a struggle to become the most powerful. Clan MechWarriors battle inside futuristic two-legged war machines, called BattleMechs, on the terrains of the solar system. The Mech pilots advance in rank through arena-style battles, the goal being to become the ultimate leader of all the Clans and restore peace to the Inner Sphere.



Conqueror AD1086

Time Warner Interactive • (0171) 391 4300 • August • CD



Programmed by San Diego based Software Sorcery, it seems like this is the perfect team to produce a game based on medieval England. *Conqueror's* gameplay will feature politics, warfare, land management and marriage (aah!). Using a mixture of 3-D graphics and a blend of action, adventure, strategy and role-playing, you must

outwit other knights and fulfil your quest of ruling blighty.

Many aspects of England's past has been taken into consideration, including shifts in religious sway depending on what part of the country you're in. Jousts and other tournaments have also been included on what should be the Nineties answer to *Defender of the Crown*.

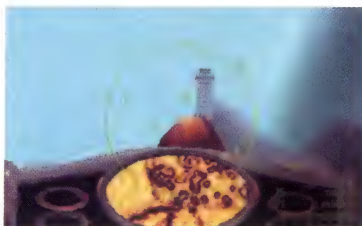
Damnesia

Psygnosis • (0151) 709 5755 • August • CD

In this post-apocalyptic shoot-'em-up, mankind has been forced to live underground, and split themselves into three warring factions: the Retros, the Neos and the Dark Moon Sector.

As a member of the Dark Moon Sector, word has reached you that the Neos and Retros are planning a combined strike. Your mission is to

take a Cyclone assault ship and venture to the rotting surface to see what you can find. Rumour has it that the Neo and Retro craft are working together using high energy shields to protect themselves, and you've no idea why. So it's down to you – find out what you can, where you can, and hopefully live to tell the tale...



Damn, everything's spinning.

Featuring fully rendered enemy fighters and intelligent enemy ships, you fly through caverns, over polygon texture mapped landscapes and under water, accompanied by an original rock soundtrack.

GOTCHA!

as *Wolf*, *Lion* looks to be as graphically vivid as its lupine predecessor with full use made of 3-D. There are various missions to carry out such as chasing a herd of zebra or gnawing the hind legs of a wildebeest. Two modes of play are available; nomad, which involves a single lion, and pride, with control over multiple lions, allowing the player to switch between them for optimal hunting effectiveness. If pretending to be a large, dangerous cat type thing is your bag, then this is the game for you.

Allegiance from Team 17 is set to be an ultra-violent first person perspective *Doom*ular affair with more blood and gore than you can shake a stick at. It is currently at a very early stage, in fact at the time of writing the full motion video footage is still being shot. How do we know this? Because our debonair production editor, Steve Hill (stop, Steve, you're killing us – Ed), is set to play a leading role in the game, currently being filmed in the glamorous location of Ossett, West Yorkshire. Assuming he survives, next month's issue will carry a full report of the proceedings.

Bullfrog are currently buzzing with activity after the E3 show and have announced their latest titles to PC POWER. *Theme Hospital* is the follow-up to *Theme Park* and features the goings on at a general hospital, if you get my meaning. You control the staff and must regulate the flow of patients and see that everyone gets cured in the shortest possible time. Interestingly enough that's the mirror opposite of the British health service.

Syndicate 2 as you might have guessed is the sequel to the massively popular gun fest and is set to be even bigger and more violent.

Dungeon Keep is one you will never have heard of, but we found it lurking on a Bullfrog CD and it looks to be a full 3-D *Dungeon Master* game. Check out details in the E3 report on page 18.

Finally from Bullfrog is a potential game of the year, *Magic Carpet 2*. Featuring an improved version of their 3-D game engine, *MC2* will also be much bigger and should be a more accomplished game than the recently released *Hidden Worlds* data disk. All these games will be featured in next issue and will be out in the last quarter of the year. All good things come to those who wait.

Tips

Another installment in the monthly compendium of invaluable gaming advice from our resident stupid-trousered tipster, Keith Pullin.



DARK FORCES

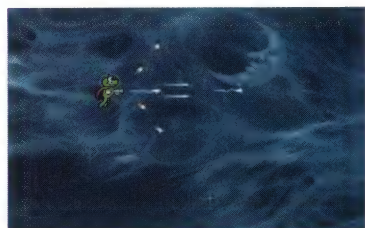
Last month we published some cheats for the sci-fi blaster of the year so far; we hope you enjoyed them. However, we've used the Force to obtain some more, so you may want to give these extra codes a try.

LAJABSHIP – Skip to Jabba's ship.
LATALAY – Skip to Talay.
LASEWERS – Skip to the sewers.

SUPERFROG

A couple of months ago we printed the first half of the codes for *Superfrog*, we now proudly present the rest of them:

| | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Level 3.2: 882311 | Level 3.3: 992334 |
| Level 3.4: 091332 | Level 4.1: 467464 |
| Level 4.2: 818234 | Level 4.4: 298383 |
| Level 4.4: 298383 | Level 5.1: 452234 |
| Level 5.2: 984841 | Level 5.3: 383772 |
| Level 5.4: 093152 | Level 6.1: 387211 |
| Level 6.2: 981122 | Level 6.3: 017632 |
| Level 6.4: 398112 | |



Did you ever, as a kid, fill your wellies with tadpoles? No? Just me, then.

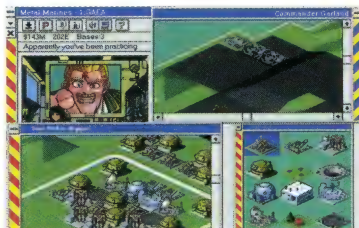
THE LION KING

For a useful level skip, type **DWARF** on the main menu and then press L during the game to jump to the next level.

METAL MARINES

For those of you that don't like ploughing your way through the early levels of games, these codes will help you considerably.

Level 1: **PNTM**
 Level 2: **HBBT**
 Level 3: **PCRC**
 Level 4: **NWTN**
 Level 5: **LSMD**
 Level 6: **CLST**
 Level 7: **JPTR**
 Level 8: **NBLR**
 Level 9: **PRSC**
 Level 10: **PHTN**
 Level 11: **TRNS**
 Level 12: **RNSN**
 Level 13: **ZDCP**
 Level 14: **FKDV**



The Metal Marines are in town, to drink Brasso and chat up petrol pumps.



SLIPSTREAM 5000

An extremely helpful cheat mode is hidden in *Slipstream 5000*. All you need to do is type **REFINERY** on the main menu and you can race on every single track immediately. Massive amounts of cash will also be available, so don't delay – buy heaps of incredible gear for your ship and fly on into the *Slipstream 5000* history books.



In the immortal words of the B-52s, "What's that on your head? A wiiiig!"
 A definite policy of head-slapping.

Level 15: **YSHM**
 Level 16: **CLPD**
 Level 17: **LNVV**
 Level 18: **JFMR**
 Level 19: **JCRY**
 Level 20: **KNLB**

ULTIMATE SOCCER MANAGER

Now this really does give the game away, we're not talking bungs here, we're on about no nonsense cheating – winning at all costs. When asked to enter your name at the start of the game, type **MAKE BELIEVE**. At any point when a match is not being played press '+' to get an extra £100,000 in your bank account. Keep doing this for a big cash injection. At any point during a match press the following keys:

G: Attributes a goal to the player that last passed the ball.
E: Goes straight into a penalty shoot-out.
F: Gives away a foul.
Esc: Quits the current half, leaving the score as it stands.
1: Ends the match instantly with a 1-0 result.
2: Ends the match instantly with a 2-0 result.



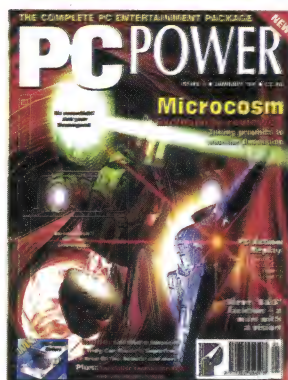
3: Ends the match instantly with a 3-0 result.
4: Ends the match instantly with a 0-1 result.
5: Ends the match instantly with a 0-2 result.
6: Ends the match instantly with a 0-3 result.

NOVASTORM

When you first start playing level one, type **TOMATOES** and then at the end of the level you'll go into a special bonus level, with wacky music. You can also shoot strawberries at enemies in this section – the programmers were not well people!



A Novastorm in a teacup.



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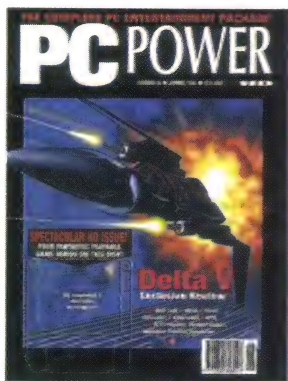
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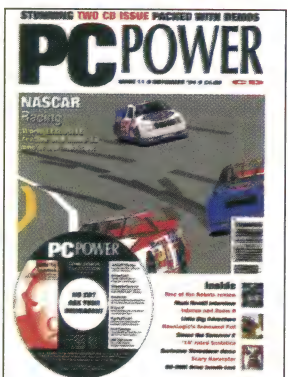
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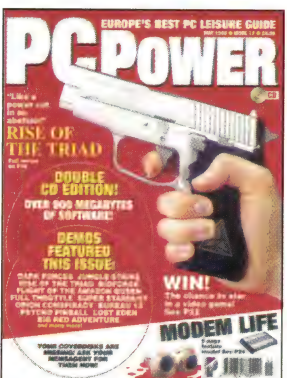
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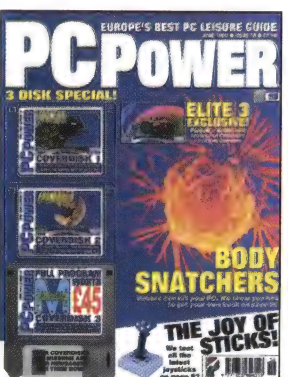
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Bioforge

Part 2

The second and concluding part of the complete walk-through of EA's superb sci-fi horror adventure – *Bioforge*!

Acid test

If the reactor has not been deactivated, a tremor will shake Lex off the ledge and into the acid lake. The moral of the story, quite clearly, is, if you turn the reactor off you'll cross the ledge with no problems, if you don't – you die. Once Lex is across, go through the tunnel into the tunnel basin and jump off the ledge down onto the beach. At the second block, use the alien transport device to zip trip across the acid lake to where the crashed dropship is located.

Evade the advances of the acid beast that lurks around here and move into the dropship interior. Fight Captain Tumult and when he has been defeated pick up the Tonfa gun and key device. Some medicine may

be needed at this point, so grab that too. Use the key device to open the doors to the gunnery station. Go over to the missile control monitor and fire a shot past the acid beast. Fire again. This shot will kill the acid beast. Go back outside the dropship.

Drop me a package

Check out the missile pack lying beside the dropship, and remove the warhead which is poking out. Once the warhead has been taken off, the missile will start to count down. Zoom back over the acid lake, climb back over the block, get back on the ledge and sprint to the blast door. Place the warhead by the blast door and run back to the tunnel basin. The warhead will detonate, blowing

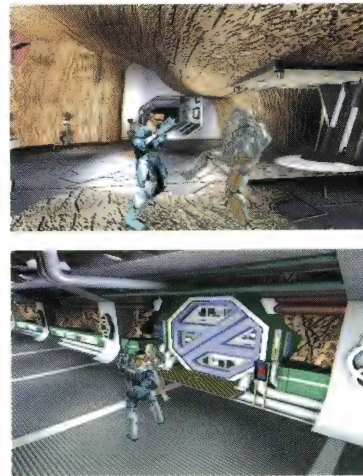


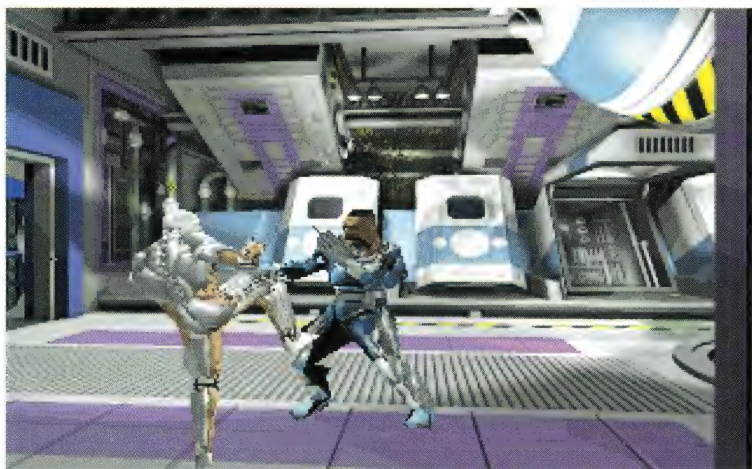
up the blast doors. Make sure the basin is reached in time otherwise

Lex will get thrown into the acid lake by the blast. With a bit of luck and quick feet, Lex should just make it. Go back to the blast door and wander through the airlock/hardsuit machine to the dig site.

Digging in the dirt

Kill the Shrimp. Give Doctor Escher the medicine and in return she will give you an alien inscription translator. Go through the tunnel, through the basin and into the alien temple. Use the translator to translate the writing in there; a different translation will appear depending on which wall Lex is nearer to. Pay particular attention to the rings around the statue, then move off to the corridor. Once in the corridor, kill another Shrimp

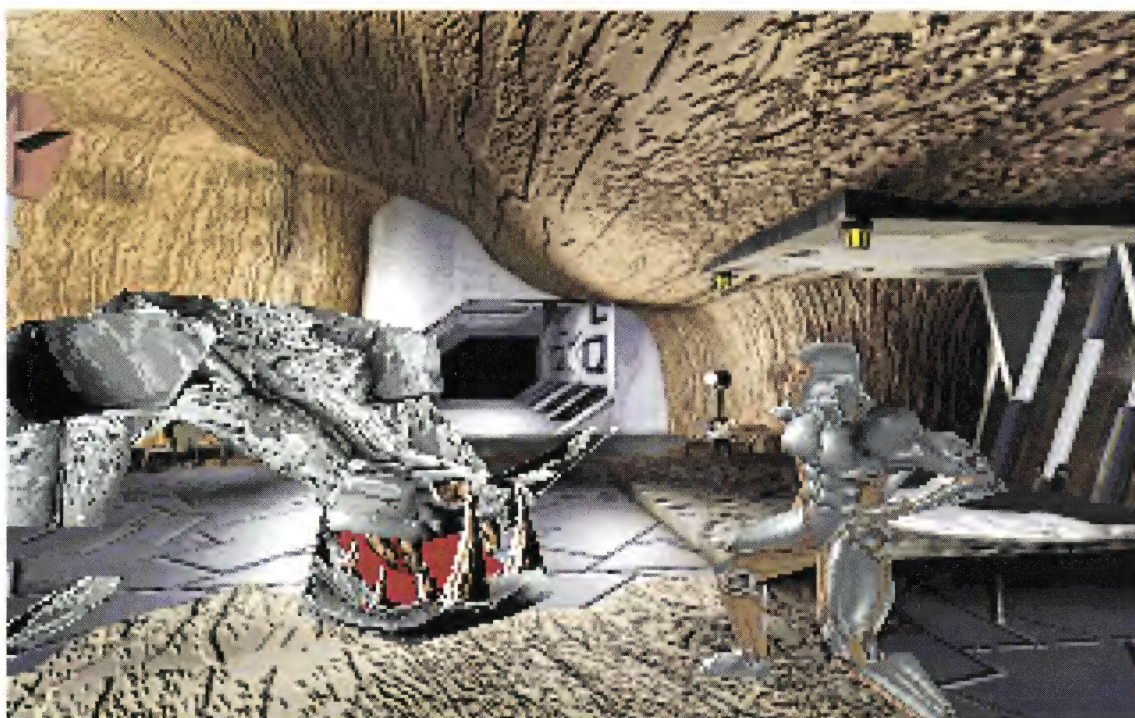
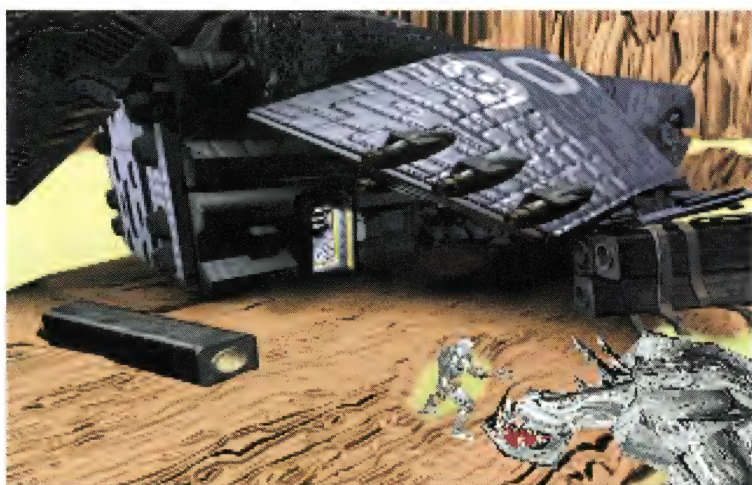




Have a look at the lighted gravity tube that leads to the tubeway station. Use this and you will be taken to the station.

A little money and a take-away curry

Another Shrimp rears its ugly head here, do the right thing and then use the monitor in the centre of the room to open the Zero G Room. The following button combination enables you to travel to the Zero G Room: far right, bottom, far left and centre.

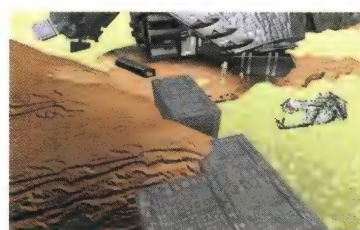


Now use the tube. Shoot the gun to open the door which leads Lex to the final battle room. Drogg will appear once again, this time you must fight him to the death, so sock it to him, but don't use energy weapons – they will not kill him. Watch out for the floor as well – there are two sections which collapse underneath you.

When Drogg finally kicks the bucket he will drop a mirror suit device, pick it up and go to the alien city platform. As you walk into this mysterious place, an alien Learner is messing around with some controls. Suddenly the city bursts back into life and the alien walks towards you with his arms extended – a peaceful gesture. Talk to him and take the battery then go back to the Zero G Room. Fire a weapon to propel Lex across to the tube then take the tube to the tube station. Use the monitor in the centre of the room to open the gravity ring. The combination is: top right, far left, centre.

Tubeway Army

Go to the gravity ring. Avoid all the flying debris and work your way to the triangles on the floor. Line up the 'ε' symbol and the gravity ring will clear of debris. The gravity ring will now open up under the acid lake. Go through the tubeway station and use the following code on the monitor to get back to the dig site: top, far left, centre. At the dig site, pick up Dr Escher's logbook and have a quick read. You will notice that the airlock/hardsuit



machine has been destroyed. Return to the tubeway station. For the last time, use the monitor in the centre of the room. Enter the following combination: top right, bottom, far left, centre. Now use the alien monitor beside the alien temple tube to move the statue in the alien temple. Now watch the alien temple from the monitor. Use the alien temple tube to lower the statue back onto the tube then open the tube up again. Get the grenade that the Marine threw at you and throw it back at him. Be quick though, otherwise you'll be blown into a million pieces – nasty. Now use the tube to travel to the alien temple.

Temple of Doom

Go to the ledge across the tunnel basin and try to avoid the Marine who charges out from the blast door corridor. Defeat the Marine who is waiting outside the tunnel and go through the tunnel back to the ledge. Avoid the blasts from the landing ship on the platform and, after hearing the farewell message from Dr Mastaba, go to the landing platform.

Defeat yet another Marine and walk up to the airlock doors; they will open up allowing access to the airlock. Go to the basement corridor, defeat one of the Marine blokes and push the button to open the elevator. Enter the elevator and go to level three – the control corridor. Defeat yet another Marine in the hallway and then the Marine that exits the hallway – they're all over the place, the slimy 'think they're hard gits'. Anyway, wipe them out then go into the operating theatre.

Use the monitor in there to look up Lex's identity then run to the control room where you must defeat another Marine. Head through to the machine shop and install the battery into the bike.

Get the hell out

Lex will automatically ride the bike out of the Mondite base and you will see it circle the mouth of the volcano. The bike then enters the gravity ring and is hurled around with incredible force, almost tearing it to bits. The bike is soon tossed out of the gravity ring and streaks off into space. Some other ships also escape, the planet detonates and Lex rides off into the unknown. No doubt this will not be the last we see of Lex and Dr Mastaba, so watch out in about a year's time for the solution to *Bioforce 2 – The Return of Mastaba!* Probably.

Alone in the Dark 3

Part 2

The final part of the complete walk-through solution, only with PC POWER!

A grave situation

When the corpses rise out of the graves, use the **warstick** on the dais in the middle of the graveyard. This will kill them and a flash will point to one of the gravestones. Walk over to this grave, and use the **ace of diamonds** – the slab will slide open. Pick up the message and then watch as you rise up out of the ground straight up to another window on the top floor of the house.

In this homely looking room, pick up the **oil can**, **roll of film** and **bag of pemmican**. Use the **oil can** on the mechanism in the fireplace... wow! The wall will disappear revealing a huge ballroom. Eat the **bag of pemmican** and walk up to the woman. Search the woman to find a **box of cartridges**, then the man to find a **hammer**. Go up to the stage and search the gramophone. Here there is a **guitar string**, **musical score** and **key to a safe**. A small minstrel begins shooting at Carnby then starts following him. Kill him, then go behind the strange cupboard. A secret passage is located here which will lead you to a main corridor.

Walk to the door directly opposite and use the **30/30 bullet** on it. Now use the **hammer** and the lock will blow, allowing Carnby to go through – and that is probably the most obscure puzzle in the whole game.

The next room is rather weird. Go up to the model of the railway station and search it for a **blasting cap**, **map** and **light bulb**. Go over to the mounting table and use the **light bulb**, then the **guitar string** and finally the **roll of film**. This shows a small movie of Emily being possessed. Use the musical score and the number 806 should be visible.

Exit the room and Carnby will now be in a bank. Pick up the **astronomy book** on the table and have a quick read. Go over to the picture on the wall at the far end and search. It will



swing open revealing a code entry device, keep searching it until the number 806 appears.

Once this code appears it is possible to go behind the counter without being shot by the enormous gun. Walk up to the safe at the end of the room and use the **pearl** followed by the **key** to a safe. A thief will emerge and steal the **Indian Amulet** from Carnby. Chase him and beat him to get it back. Now go back to the safe and pick up **Hill Century's money** and the **box of cartridges**. Once all this has been accomplished go up to the window and open it, Carnby climbs out and does a dramatic death-slide on to the roof of the next building.

Carnby plummets down onto the floor and meets a huge blacksmith bloke who gives him a **message** from Jed Stone. It's an aggressive message that orders Carnby to meet him at the water tower – at midnight! For the time being, search the cart and pick up the **detonator box** and the **box of cartridges**. Climb into the cart for the ride of a lifetime! Unfortunately, the message bearer was slaughtered by a couple of assassins waiting outside; Carnby had a lucky escape! When the ride ends, kill the wild nutters who close in, then go through the open door to the station.

The doors will close once Carnby's inside. Push the plank that has station written on it and the bucket of paint will fall over dropping the **key to a suitcase** onto the ground. Pick this up and move to the



stacks of wood. Search these to find an **eye-bolt**. Use the **eye-bolt** on the bell which has no clapper and the door next to it will keep sliding open and closed. Time the run so Carnby manages to get through without killing himself.

Once outside the station, use the **blasting cap** to the right of the door, then cross the tracks and use the **detonator box** by the crack on the rock face. The station will explode spectacularly – if you don't do this the same bloke that appeared before will return and steal the **Indian Amulet**. Now the fun starts...

Go to the water tower and Jed Stone will ask you to throw the suitcase and the key down. Do as he says and place **Hill Century's money** and the **key** to a suitcase at the feet of the ghost by the ladder. Things start to look a bit bleak at this point and in fact you are killed, but Carnby still has the **amulet**...

...and cat on a cold tin roof

Luckily, the **amulet** summoned a Navajo Indian who takes Carnby to the safety of his cave. In here life is restored to the ace ghost detective, and as far as re-incarnation goes this has got to be one of the better fates. Carnby is now a Jaguar, but to show his gratitude Carnby must recover a small golden statue of the eagle.

Run out of the cave, through the graveyard and go into the saloon. The jaguar can leap up the stairs and can even leap over the hole in

the middle of the hallway. Run up to the window that Carnby smashed through earlier and a massive jump will send the jaguar soaring over the gap onto the mazy roof. Sprint up to the gap in the wall where you can see the Statue of Jed Stone and run off, the jaguar will once again perform an enormous jump that will take him over to the statue, here is the **eagle-shaped nugget** – the thing that's needed.

Don't take it back yet. Go to the barrel of tar, which is down the alley where the glowing lizard runs along the drainpipe, and dip a paw in it. Now go into the building on the right of the alley and dip a paw in the cask of silver salts, this coats the jaguar's paw in silver.

Run to the Saloon (remember – this whole section is on a time limit so it must be done as quickly as possible). When the saloon is reached the clouds in the sky part, revealing a full moon – aaargghh! Suddenly the man who was being whipped and the guy hanging from the rafters turn into werewolves! Fight them as the jaguar and then you can go back to the cave. Put the **eagle-shaped nugget** in the fire and one of the best cinematic sequences in the whole game follows...

Living in a box

Burying what the goons think is Carnby's dead body, they are suddenly shocked to see yours truly bursting out of the grave. One of them drops a **colt** as he runs away, leaving it for Carnby to pick up.

Go back to the water tower and Carnby's double will be standing there waiting. Don't fight him though – just calmly place the **colt** at his feet and get ready for a surprise. He will leap into the real body of Carnby and suddenly the quiet unassuming supernatural detective is transformed into super cowboy! Well, almost.





Pick up the **colt** and climb the ladder to the top of the water tower. Walk along and jump down into the tank by falling off the left side of the plank.

In here some crank thinks he can beat up Carnby with a **metallic brush**. Beat the hell out of him, pick it up, then collect the **flask** on the other side of the tank. If you wander around the base, a small lump of wood should be apparent. Use the **metallic brush** on this and it opens the panel. Fall down here to go into a series of underground tunnels.

Pick up the **notepad** and the **dead leaf** and look at the map of the caves which is on the wall. Use the **dead leaf** on the bust of the Navajo Indian, this will cause the door in that room to silently slide open. Climb the ladder in front, walk forward into the next room and grab the **pickaxe** which is on the shelf to the right as you enter. Swing this at the mutated things with large arms that wander forward and they will be disposed of fairly rapidly. Once defeated, pick up the **flask** from the shelf and exit the room.

Next is the spiky pit, but first pick up and read the important **sheets of paper** found in the corner. This room is a leap of faith. There's a certain route across that makes invisible blocks appear, find this route and Carnby can take out some huge bloke who's carrying a pickaxe. Just steam straight in and repeatedly swing the **pickaxe** so it embeds itself in the bloke's chest – killing him, horribly! Now go through to the library.

The library contains one monster who can be disposed of easily enough, but the **pickaxe** is broken in the process. Search the shelf to the right of the burning candle to find a **scorched book** and also pick up the **book** which is lying on the floor. Remember to read all this useful literature, they tend to give away a lot of clues. Near the door is a **needle**. Take this and go over to the bracket which is sticking out from one of the pillars. Searching this adds a **candlestick** to the inventory and also opens the locked door. Pick up the **water pitcher** on the way to the door and then go through into the corridor with the tiny rifle bloke at the end. Walk up very close to him, but be careful not to touch him, then use the **water pitcher**. This opens the door to the elevator.

Pick up the **china piggy bank** and throw it against the wall to smash it and reveal a **microscope slide**. Push the lever at the bottom left of the screen and the elevator will move downwards. When the doors next



open, walk forward into the room with the colour switches on the wall. Use the **microscope slide** on the machine in there, then use the machine. Four colours appear, push the switches on the wall in that order and the door will open.

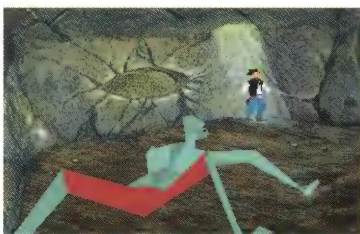
Depths of despair

Strolling into the lab it's worth searching the shelf next to the odd tube containing green liquid. Here you will discover a **vial of poison**. Use the **vial of poison** and the **needle** to create a **poison needle**. Now go over to the distillery coil and use the **vial of poison** again. This in fact induces a strange effect on Carnby, as he shrinks down to a small size. Walk into the cell containing the mutated scientist, Carnby will grow back to normal size, now use the **poison needle** and stab the scientist with it. He will die, dropping a **key to the gaol** and a **piece of straw**. Collect them along with the **bottle of ammonia**. Use the **key to the gaol** to exit the cell and then use the coil again. Once Carnby has shrunk, go through the tiny gap under the table.

Use the **piece of straw** and then run forward. The **piece of straw** will be used to pole-vault and Carnby will fly over the tar pit. Before exiting the cave, pick up the **vial of potion**.

In here you will find a giant monster which is half man and half spider. Pick up the **pot of glue** which is on the floor, then go over to the glowing substance by the wall and use the **vial of potion** on it. The next time the monster has a nibble on his food he will shrink and can be killed simply by standing on him. Use the **pot of glue** and it spills all over your hands. Move to where the light is shining down from the ceiling and climb up the wall.

As soon as you enter the next room, pick up **Hammer's head** (the skull) which is lying on the table and



throw it down the hole. Hammer, the stupid lump that he is, will jump down the hole after his beloved head, but why he couldn't put it on his shoulders in the first place nobody knows...

Once he's gone, pick up the **lead ingot** from the table and then push the table aside. This reveals a **flask** and also allows you to search the wall, so you can pick up the **Winchester**.

Go out of the room and then blast the crazy Ninja in the corridor (his name is Cobra incidentally) with the **Winchester**, it will take five shots. This kills him and he will drop a **cobra wig** and a **silver dollar**. Put the **silver dollar** into the picture of Jed Stone and the door will open, but have a sip of the **flask** in the corner of the room before you go through.

Shocking scenes of depravity greet you. There in the middle of the room is Emily, her torturers run out of the room when you arrive but they're not far away...

Pick up the **ammunition**, then use the **lead ingot** on the crucible. Once that is safely in there, use the **box of matches**. The lead will melt and flow into the lava channels surrounding Emily. Somehow Emily awakens, gets up and then faints in the corner of the room. The lead will eventually melt and incredibly a new item known as the **evil wand with a mineral tip** appears in the inventory.

Leave the room and go into the corridor, here is some double trou-

ble. A spiked wall slowly starts moving towards you, as well as a monster. Force the monster into the wall of death, pick up the **knife** that he drops. Now turn around and throw the **bottle of ammonia** at the door. This will wake Emily up – she then pulls the lever to stop the spiked wall and wanders off.

Go to the other end of the corridor, use the **cobra wig** on the chain that hangs down which opens the door leading to the final room.

Don't forget to tip the eagle

There are a lot of enemies around here. Go over to the statue, stand in front of it and use the **evil wand with a mineral tip**. A flash ensues which kills all the cowboys in the room (these guys are actually the Elwood brothers). Run over to the corner of the room which has the **rubber glove** on the floor, pick this up and use it. Turn the valve nearest to you, this can be done by opening it – obviously all this must be done with the utmost care as Jed is running around like a maniac shooting large holes out of your backside. It might even be worth drinking the **flask** in this room too, just to be sure.

If the valve has been turned successfully, the tiny channel on the floor will fill up with water. Walk over to where the channel reaches the wall and the wires run across the top. Use the **knife** and the wires will fall into the channel full of water. Run to safety. The next time Jed walks over the water he will be electrocuted! After a bit of quivering and shaking, he will disintegrate. Now pick up the **bag of coal** and exit through the now open door.

There's a little bit more to do now, but needless to say when it involves a steam train and a **bag of coal** it's fairly obvious what the solution to the problem is.

Finally, well done. Sit back and watch the superb end sequence – with a fully rendered train. All the pain and torment of the game is now forgotten, but what of the journey home for Emily and Edward, sounds like perfect material for *Alone in the Dark 4*...



Internet results

“The Internet and the dole are the only growth areas today. We’ll soon get the dole on-line!”

Nick Hixson, Mike Swift and Martin Coles:
Bournemouth's very own cybermen!

Surfboard under his arm, Steve Hill visits the new Bournemouth Internet.

Net surfing, infobahns, superhighways and all manner of cybertoss. What's it all about? Internet is currently the word of the moment and a host of companies are springing up which provide easy access to the mythical Net. One such company is the spanking new Bournemouth Internet, who I visited on their first day on-line.

Mike Swift, salesperson and genial scouser, is essentially the mouth-piece of the company. He was formerly a music promoter, working with such seminal Eighties Liverpool bands as Echo & The Bunnymen and The Teardrop Explodes. Mike is still involved with perennial under-achievers China Crisis, to whom he may consider devoting an Internet page, following the example of such trend-setters as dance act Future Sound of London, who allegedly tour the world via the Internet.

Mike migrated to Bournemouth from the 'Pool (along with about a million others) seven years ago and was a long time user of the Net before setting up the company. They occupy modest premises in an unglamorous area of the town, but this makes no great difference as all that is needed is the equipment. As Mike points out, you could just as

well "shove it in a garage." Following an "absolutely hectic" first day though, they are already looking to expand their premises.

So exactly what service does the Bournemouth Internet provide? Mike says, "It's a local access point for Internet users and Internet wannabes. We provide full Internet access to Bournemouth and the surrounding area for the cost of a local call. The interface is easy on the eye, easy to use, self-explanatory and very graphical."

For £25, new subscribers receive the necessary software to be connected, and from then on the fee is £10 per month. Mike is the first to admit that their service is no different from anyone else, as the Internet is the Internet, no matter how you are connected. Their only advantage is to local callers, whose phone bills will be greatly reduced.

Obviously in the current climate, with an estimated 250 million users and a predicted 10% increase per month, now is an excellent time to be setting up. Mike agreed, "Oh it is, because when people wake up now, they'll see the Internet somewhere mentioned. Walking down the street, they'll hear something about the information superhighway. They read the local paper and see something about technology and the Internet

and things. More and more people each and every day are becoming more and more computer literate. There is a set of figures out: apparently by the year 2000, every home will have a PC and one in five will be connected to the Net. I've no reason to doubt them. In the very, very near future, if you want to conduct yourself in any way and try to get round this minefield, you're going to have to have an e-mail and that's where we'll score. This and the dole queue are the only growth areas. We'll get the dole on line!"

This isn't as ludicrous a suggestion as it seems as the Net is already used to look for employment.

"You can get a fantastic amount of jobs on the Net. At the moment, most are Net related or computer related. There's going to be a software program soon, if it's not already available, where you can actually dial in what job you want, say van driver, and a list of van driver jobs will pop up."

So what does Mike actually think the Internet is? "A vast resource of information. It's whatever you want it to be. There's something for everyone. If somebody comes to me in my capacity as a seller of the Net, and says 'I'm in such a business', no matter what business, I will be able to advise them what they can get

from the Net. Undertakers – anyone – there's a benefit of being on the Net. If the local dustman says 'What can it do for me?', I'll find some benefits for him."

With such a vast array of information and entertainment readily available, it is easy to become addicted. Mike admits himself that he can't leave it alone" and talks of pale, pallid red-eyed users cutting themselves off from the real world. As he says, "My wife's become a Net widow."

To a lot of people, the Internet is a sinister mystery that they can never hope to comprehend. These are usually the kind of people who struggle to use a payphone. Mike cites his own wife as an example, saying that when he's downloading pictures of Pamela Anderson, "She thinks I'm fixing the video."

But, he continues, "People used to think demons jumped out of the phone. It's very understandable that they don't understand, and we're here to help them, and to explain the benefits. To unravel the spaghetti, as it were."

With the advent of companies like the Bournemouth Internet, it should soon become possible for almost anyone to gain access, whether for useful purposes such as finding a job, or just to look at smut from the 'University of Stockholm'. ☺

To get on-line with Bournemouth Internet, call (01202) 292900, or e-mail bournemouth.co.uk

If you use your PC for anything more serious than chainsawing Cyberdemons, you'll need some way of getting your work from screen to paper so that people who don't know a mouse from a modem can read it. There are literally hundreds of printers on the market; how do you know what's best for you? Simple - leave it to PC POWER! Jon Pyle and Bruce Tober take a look at a representative selection of machines dedicated to ink/paper synergy, and sort the ugly sisters from the...

Home printers have acquired an image as slow, noisy and wasteful – but all this is about to change. Laser printer prices are falling fast and new designs are constantly appearing. The question is, which printer is right for you, and how can you get the most for your money?

Before we look at the best home printers currently available, let's examine the different approaches to printing and the problems typically faced by the various printer types.

Daisywheel/Golfball

The first printers were based on early typewriters. These archaic machines used simple mechanisms to rotate a printing head shaped like a ball or wheel. The head had the letters of the alphabet embossed onto it so that when the correct letter was selected the ball would be pushed onto the page, leaving the imprint of a letter. The disadvantages of such printers are that only one

typeface is available, the mechanism is very noisy and it is impossible to print graphics.

Dot-Matrix

The majority of early home printers had dot-matrix mechanisms. They print by firing tiny pins onto an inked ribbon to hit the page and create a dot. Dot-matrix printers use one of two main pin layouts, either 9-pin or the more accurate 24-pin. The drawbacks to dot-matrix machines are that they are noisy, and graphics appear stripy or banded as the terminology goes.

Wax-Transfer

A simple printing method using a similar technique to dot-matrix printers, but the ink used is fundamentally different. Wax-transfer printers heat their pins and push them onto a wax-covered film. The wax is melted by the printing pin, leaving a dot on the page. The advantages of this may not seem immediately obvious, but they do make extremely good colour printers because the melting

wax allows colours to be mixed on the page.

InkJet/BubbleJet

A relatively new development, these printers rely on a microscopic reaction inside the print head which creates a compressed gas behind a small quantity of ink, forcing it onto the page. The only real drawback to this system is that they suffer from the same banding as dot-matrix machines and they can sometimes saturate a page with ink.

Laser

This system is by far the most complex. It uses a rotating drum over which a laser beam draws the page, electrically charging the areas of the drum it strikes. This charged drum is then exposed to toner dust. The toner sticks to the charged areas of the drum, meaning that when the paper is finally rolled through the machine an exact image is pressed smoothly straight onto the page. The only disadvantage of a laser printer is its immense cost.

GLOSSARY

PPM might sound uncomfortably like a monthly bodily cycle, but it's actually printer related. Here's a guide to the terms used in this feature.

PPM – Pages per minute. A measure of printing speed, most often used to describe laser printing performance.

DPI – Dots per inch. A measure of printing accuracy.

CPI – Characters per inch. Another measure of printing, this time the number of characters that can be printed in, surprisingly, one inch.

CPS – Characters per second. A measure of printing speed, most often used to describe the speed of printers with mobile print heads.

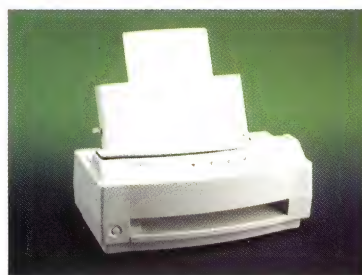
Banding – Striped graphics suffered by printers that use a moving print head, such as dot-matrix or inkjet.



Prints
CHARMING

BROTHER HJ-400

Supplier: Status ■ (0161)
330 6531 ■ £299 + VAT



The HJ-400 is a no nonsense, busy looking ink jet printer which outperforms many of its rivals. For starters, it sports a 100 sheet automatic feeder (twice as large as other ink jets in its class) which performed flawlessly during testing, although the paper does need to be inserted carefully. It also prints at resolutions up to 360 by 360 dots per inch, making it the most accurate ink jet reviewed here. Its sensible front panel shows five buttons which allow you to switch the printer on and off-line, feed paper, and choose between economy mode, condensed mode, and cleaning mode.

Economy mode cuts down the amount of ink used during printing, thereby allowing you to produce draft prints at the touch of a button. Condensed mode squeezes more text onto the page, allowing you to print 132 characters per line (ideal for spreadsheet printing), and cleaning mode causes the printer to automatically wipe any excess ink from the print head.

The printer drivers supplied by Brother were hassle-free and efficient. They quickly digested Word documents and graphic images without a single glitch, but the text output did raise one problem. When printing a Word document, the resulting type seemed blurred and, on further inspection, splashes of ink could clearly be seen around the letters. This unfortunate side effect happened even immediately after setting the printer into cleaning mode. To be fair, this problem is to some extent unavoidable with any jet printer, but it did surprise me as the other ink jet printers reviewed did not suffer from this as badly as the Brother, despite their lower resolution.

The HJ-400 is very easy to use and competitively priced, but I was a bit concerned about the low quality of text output.

This printer will give you plenty of hours of problem-free printing, but you have to be prepared to put up with less than immaculate output. I would suggest that you consider one of the other ink jets if text quality is your priority.

Rating: 85%

CITIZEN ABC

Citizen Europe Ltd ■ (01753)
584111 ■ £189 + VAT

Installing this inexpensive, quiet (less than 48dba) printer is as simple as plugging it in and connecting a parallel cable from the computer to it. Intended for home and SOHO use, the ABC is feature laden, including a built in automatic sheet feeder (ASF), accommodating either letterhead paper or tractor-fed, fan-fold paper (with optional tractor feeder).

Installation is simplified even further by the inclusion of Citizen EasyStart Software which takes you through the entire process, from removing the contents of the carton to connecting the printer to your computer and then installing the printer drivers for your software applications.

Even more impressively, as well as paper, it takes envelopes, overhead transparencies, multi-part forms or labels. Built-in fonts include one draft, five letter-quality and two scalable.

Graphics are printed in 360 by 360DPI resolution which means that add-on fonts and various graphic and international character sets are easily printed. And it's fast. A sample A4 page with a quarter page full colour graphic and a variety of colours and fonts printed in just over 15 minutes, a 65 page document printed flawlessly in about 70 minutes with only one reload of the approximately 30 page ASF. Printing in draft mode is approximately 160CPS at 10CPI, and in letter-quality mode printing is 53 CPS at 10CPI.

Optional add-ons, in addition to the tractor sheet feeder are a 128K memory buffer (8K is standard) and a seven colour print kit. A simple, colour-coded control panel with only three touch pads replaces much more complex panels on other less capable machines. The ABC measures 167mm high by 247mm deep and 385mm wide.

Now if only they had taken the care to place the power switch on the front of the box rather than hiding it away on the right-hand side. Oh well, I guess you can't have everything.



Rating: 92%

CITIZEN PN60

Supplier: Silica ■ (0181)
309 5000 ■ £299



The Citizen PN60 is the smallest printer of its type available; not only that, but it prints in colour! It is slightly smaller than a furled portable umbrella, in fact it's only 1" wider than an A4 page. An amusing but necessary side effect of its size is the tendency for the print head to pop out of the right-hand side of the casing when printing to the edge of the page, so you need to be sure that nothing will get in its way before you print.

Besides this odd quirk of design, the PN60 gave absolutely no problems. Citizen's driver software installed without a single problem and offers a wealth of configuration options to the user. The print density can be configured to a variety of settings up to 360 by 360 DPI, dithering (that is printing random dots to lower the contrast of an image) can be set to one of three different methods and the type of printer ribbon – either black or colour – can be chosen.

The PN60's manual describes this high density as 'laser quality' but, while early laser printers did print at 300 DPI, the PN60's mechanism stops it from reaching true laser quality. This is because the PN60 needs to feed paper through itself line by line and this is very difficult to do accurately. The laser uses a continuous drum to print its image, so does not suffer from 'banding' like the PN60 and other paper-feeding printers.

This niggle aside, the PN60's quality is superb. It uses a wax-transfer printing method to create vividly coloured images very reliably, and text is just as impressive. Another good point about the PN60 is its exceptionally quiet printing.

The PN60's size and practicality make it the ideal portable printer. It is supplied with a battery pack/charger which simply plugs into the wall when you're not on the move. The PN60 is small enough to fit into the carry-case of most portables along with the computer itself, so you don't need to grow any extra arms to carry it around with you. All in all, this is a superb little printer.

Rating: 90%

CITIZEN PROJET IIC

Supplier: Silica ■ (0181)
309 1111 ■ £279 + VAT

The ProJet IIC is a desktop ink jet printer with impressive, if slightly familiar, features. It handles full colour printing, has a 50 sheet feeder and a convenient manual feeder for unconventional paper sizes. It can print at resolutions up to 300 by 300DPI at speeds of up to three pages per minute, but this is only possible in draft mode.

The ProJet reacted well under testing except for a problem I encountered with the automatic sheet feeder. It is intended to hold up to 50 sheets of A4 and feed them into the printer one at a time, providing it is treated carefully and the correct paper is used. In fact the sheet feeder could not be persuaded to pass a single piece of paper into the mechanism, managing to tear or crumple the paper every time without fail.

Feeding the printer manually, however, produced some very pleasing results. Printed text was clear and free from the blurring which can occur with ink and bubble jet printing. Images emerged in sufficiently high quality to be recognised – although it would hardly be suited for professional use.

If the ProJet's problems sound familiar, then the case design will clinch it – it looks very much like a kitchen bread bin. What it resembles even more closely is the Olivetti JP360, down to the last detail. The only visible difference I could find between the two was the logo printed on the lid.

The appearance of the two printers is not the only similarity between them, though. During testing, the ProJet refused to feed any paper automatically, and the JP360 has *exactly* the same problem. They both feature the same annoying wobbly switch to change between colour and black and white printing, and both have the same annoying lid which drops shut on your wrists.

Apart from the logo, there is one factor which separates the two printers – fifteen quid. So if you are considering buying a colour ink jet then the ProJet IIC is the best value around, providing you don't mind spoonfeeding it with paper.



Rating: 69%

HEWLETT PACKARD DESKJET 540

Hewlett Packard ■
(01734) 696622 ■ £289



Back in the good old days of the original HP Laserjets and Deskjets, setting them up was almost more effort than it was worth and operating them was still more complex. And they weighed a ton.

Now comes HP's Deskjet 540, a lightweight (11.6lbs) ink jet printer with only two onboard buttons; the power button and what HP call the resume button. This, with its associated LED, acts as a paper out and an error alert warning.

Capable of handling a variety of paper types and sizes, the 540's paper tray will hold up to half an inch of letterhead paper, 90-100 sheets. Overhead transparencies, envelopes and card stock can all be used.

In monochrome, the output is beautiful. Negligible banding and a good gradation of grey scale produce wonderful graphics. Fonts are sharp and clear with excellent density.

However, colour is a problem. Changing the machine from monochrome to colour is as simple as switching the ink cartridge. Perhaps it was just the colour cartridge sent with my machine, but all colours, other than straight blue, red and green, were heavily imbued with green. In some cases red didn't print at all. Printing out the 540's test page showed the same problem indicating it wasn't the WordPerfect printer driver I was using.

The 540 prints at a resolution of 600 by 300 in monochrome and 300 by 300 in colour. Print speed in monochrome, on average, is about two pages per minute according to the company and in colour about four minutes per page, but of course printer speed depends on a wide variety of things including the speed of your computer and the software you're using.

There are four built-in fonts and about 14 scalable TrueType fonts are provided with the Windows printer driver. Also built-in is 512Kb of RAM. The 540 stands 17.2 inches wide by 7.9 inches high and 16 inches deep.

The 92-page manual is fairly well written but the machine's setup and operation are so easy, you hardly need refer to it.

Rating: 88%

HEWLETT PACKARD LASER JET 5MP

Hewlett Packard ■ (01344)
360000 ■ £970 + VAT

The LaserJet series is by far the most well-known of the laser printer ranges available. Their latest offering is the HP LaserJet 5MP. Its 600 dot per inch resolution constitutes a significant step forward in image quality, but can the big brother of laser printers still outperform its younger rivals?

As well as the HP5MP's increased resolution, it boasts pollution preventing measures which would embarrass the most avid GreenPeace supporter. It is able to recycle toner from the cartridge, it reduces emissions of harmful ozone gasses to almost zero and also includes EPA-approved (European Pollution Association) power management. Still more environmental measures further reduce the resources used up by the printer, along with its waste. EconoMode is just such a feature, it lightens print by arranging dots less densely on the page, thereby using less toner for draft printing.

As well as being environmentally aware, the HP5MP is also very connectable. It supports direct connection to any Mac or PC, and has a LocalTalk Ethernet connection. This means that to use it as a networked printer all you have to do is plug it in.

The most astonishing connection feature of the HP5MP has to be its infra-red communications. Hewlett Packard have added a natty red panel to the front of the printer. To use it you need a portable PC equipped with an infra-red transceiver which conforms to the newly-defined IrDA (Infra-red Data Association) standard. The idea is that you simply point the PC at the printer and start sending documents to it. This is all very clever, and works reliably, but why not simply plug the computer into the printer?

The LaserJet 5MP is, like most laser printers, almost totally silent. Furthermore, it produces professional quality output, it comes with 2Mb of RAM installed, and is about as environmentally friendly as you can get without jumping into an inflatable and attacking an oil tanker.



Rating: 92%

MANNESMANN TALLY MT 83C

Mannesmann Tally ■ (01734)
788711 ■ £329 + VAT



The impression is that this is a machine made for business. It looks impressive, solid, complicated, sturdy, capable of just about anything. A real tank of a printer.

Setting up the MT 83C was easy enough, simply plug and play, depending of course on the software. With WordPerfect 6.0, there is no specific printer driver for the MT 83C, but there are six emulations - IBM Proprinter X24E/XL24E, Epson LQ860/1060 and NEC P3200/P3300. I opted for the Epson LQ860.

The two standard test pages printed out fairly quickly. The text only A4 page with about 20 lines of various fonts and font sizes printed out in just under two and a half minutes and a graphics-laden page in just six minutes. But only in black and white; no matter what I did, I couldn't get it to print in colour. Furthermore, there was no tractor feeder or automatic sheet feeder.

The graphics page presented some additional problems. The printed job showed a great deal of smearing and the main graphic showed little contrast, resulting in a muddy black and grey blob. Even the text itself turned out rather poorly. The letters in the section printed in Roman 24 double high italics were poorly formed and lacked smoothness. The section in Swiss 721 Roman Small Caps printed out in its draft font.

The Mannesmann Tally MT 83C weighs in at a deceptive 6.5Kg. It looks heavier. It is large - 132mm high by 428mm wide and 315mm deep. The front panel console contains seven push buttons, which in their various combinations perform an enormous variety of functions.

Surprisingly quiet and fast, the MT 83C has a 216CPS speed in draft mode and 72CPS in letter quality and an acoustic level of less than 52dba in its quiet mode.

Paper handling is through either a manual top single sheet feed, optional automatic sheet feeder (for less than 20 sheets) or an optional tractor feed unit (feeding from either the rear or bottom). In addition, the MT 83C comes with eight resident fonts - one draft and seven letter quality.

Rating: 61%

NEC SUPERScript 660

Supplier: Silica ■ (0181)
309 1111 ■ £527

The SuperScript constitutes a big departure for laser printers. Previous lasers have all relied on the printer's ability to store an image of the page in its own memory. This makes printing very fast as the computer only needs to download this image, then leave the printer to do its job. The trouble is that a high quality laser printer needs around 2Mb of RAM to store an A4 image. This need for internal RAM reflects on the printer's price, making lasers prohibitively expensive. Until now that is.

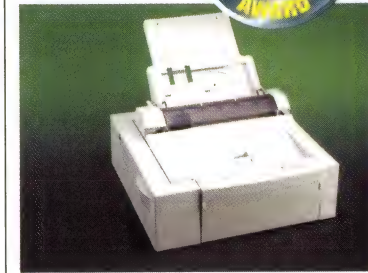
The NEC SuperScript 660 seems to have found an ingenious way around the problem; it uses the RAM of your PC to store the image. The printer still needs a little space to work with (256Kb), but the bulk of the image is assembled within the PC and fed to the printer in short bursts.

Saving memory on the printer certainly helps the user by lowering the price, but the extra strain placed on your computer's memory means that the Windows swap file will probably need to be expanded by a few meg. But if you can put up with a little extra disk swapping when you print, then the SuperScript has plenty to offer.

The performance of the SuperScript 660 is stunning. It has the same 600 by 600 dots per inch output quality as the Hewlett Packard, and can even emulate a LaserJet through a small software driver. More importantly though, it can print at up to six pages per minute - even faster than the LaserJet. It also features similar power saving and toner saving modes to make less of an impact on the wallet and the environment.

I found the SuperScript very easy to use, it has a 50 sheet feeder which somehow managed not to cause a single paper jam during testing. An optional 200 sheet feeder is also available, but was not obtainable for testing at the time of going to print.

In the home or small office, this printer is reliable and cheap with professional quality output.



Rating: 95%



OKI 410 EX

OKI ■ (01753) 819819 ■
£499 + VAT

The OKI 410 EX is a laser printer which looks and acts for all the world like the old Hewlett Packard LaserJet 3. The major difference between the two is the 410's ability to print at 600 dots per inch, as well as the LaserJet 3's 300DPI mode. The 410 is 100% compatible with the LaserJet 3, making it instantly recognisable to many existing drivers and packages. But the 410 also inherits a problem which was common to the HP LaserJet 3. When printing bitmapped graphics, its limited RAM quickly runs out, meaning that only text, very small images and vectored graphics such as Windows Meta-files (.WMF) can be printed. This means that your documents can look more than a little, well... dated. The 410 takes this problem to the extreme when using the MicroRes 600DPI mode. The new mode requires that all image files take up twice as much of the inadequate RAM to print at twice the density. The result is a printer capable of printing at 600DPI, but only in text mode.

Naturally you can add extra SIMM modules to the 410 to increase its RAM. This would be a superb idea if you were planning to print large graphic files, but the SuperScript 660 does it better, faster and cheaper.

On the subject of speed, the 410 can print at up to four pages per minute. This is another throwback to the days of the LaserJet 3. Unlike the old Hewlett Packard printers though, it has a very small footprint making it ideal for use on any size of desktop.

One aspect of the 410 which really annoyed me was the manual. The advice it contains spans a mere 30 pages, but the whole book looks impressive as it contains the same instructions in no fewer than six languages. As well as being thin on the ground, the information provided is not particularly helpful. A complicated menu system allows the printer to be configured by hand before each print job, but unfortunately, the manual's explanation of how to actually use the menu system is so slim that you end up aimlessly pressing buttons for hours before the printer will obey your commands.



Rating: 68%

OKI DOC-IT 4000

OKI ■ (01635) 524526 ■
£2495 + VAT



The OKI Doc-It 4000 document processor is a laser printer with more features than a plastic surgeon's dustbin. It produces professional quality (400DPI, scanning and printing) monochrome output, but more importantly has both a monochrome scanner and fax machine in one package.

OKI call this approach Desktop Document Processing, or DDP. The DDP system is a strange marriage, the aim of it being to reduce the amount of hard copy needed, meaning that the Doc-It's printing capabilities are used as little as possible. With DDP there is no need to print any of your fax documents, saving both time and maintenance costs.

The Doc-It 4000 is unique among the printers reviewed here, not least because it runs from an expansion card installed in your machine. This card holds 6Mb of the memory which most laser printers and photocopiers find necessary. It also houses the fax hardware, and even features a telephone through-port, meaning that you can run a normal telephone through the same line as the fax; ideal for the small business user.

The photocopying features of the Doc-It are probably the most impressive. It can feed an A4 document into the machine and store its image in the Doc-It card.

All photocopiers rely on a small piece of scanning hardware that records an image of the page as it passes through the copier. The Doc-It takes this one step further by making the scanner removable. This means that the photocopier can instantly become a hand scanner by simply ejecting the scanner hardware from its casing. This scanner also has motorised rollers which make the process of hand-scanning a document more reliable.

OKI's Doc-It is capable of printing a very favourable eight pages per minute and its money-saving design makes it a must for the serious SOHO user. It might seem expensive, but you get an awful lot of features for your money.

Rating: 90%

OKI MICROLINE 320FB

OKI ■ (01753) 819819 ■
£849 + VAT

This printer sticks out a mile from the rest of those reviewed here, it is a purely utilitarian machine intended for business needs. It is clearly intended for use as a fast, no-frills printer with the emphasis on hard work. Its huge 132 column width allows pretty much anything from documents to financial reports to be printed extremely quickly and without unnecessary fuss.

The ML320FB uses a 9-pin dot matrix printing head to pound the characters onto the page at an alarming rate. At full tilt (270 characters per second in draft mode) the whole unit shakes from side to side, wobbling the table with it as the print head screams across the page. Small tendrils of wire hang down at the rear of the unit where expelled paper leaves the printer. These act like lightning conductors, earthing the paper as it passes. These are necessary as, when printer paper moves at speed through the mechanism, it generates a huge amount of static electricity. The lightning conductors are intended to help disperse that charge through the printer's own earth.

The quality of output from the 320 FB is less than striking, it cannot print graphics and only just stretches to letter-quality printing. Like the Star dot-matrix machines, the 320 FB has two methods of accepting paper, firstly through a single sheet manual feeder and secondly through a tractor-driven automatic feeder. The tractor feeder suits this type of printer best as it can be left to its own devices all day without needing too much attention.

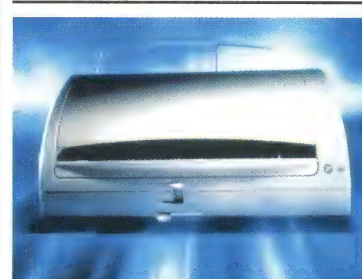
The OKI 320 FB's main role in life is to print very, very fast and not break down. In this role it performs extremely well, but as a home printer has limited appeal to say the least. Its price is also prohibitive, so unless you are buying it for strictly serious business purposes, the speed and reliability of this printer will be irrelevant. If you are looking for a business printer, perhaps for printing invoices or accounts, then this is just the ticket, but don't expect eye-catching output and remember that graphics are out of the question.



Rating: 55%

OLIVETTI JP360

Olivetti ■ (0181) 780 8232
■ £295 + VAT



The JP360 is an inkjet printer with colour capabilities. It can print at resolutions up to 300 by 300 dots per inch and includes 6 built-in fonts. Further fonts can be added by fitting font cards to a small connector on the right hand side of the unit. To me though, the most striking aspect of the JP360's design is its close resemblance to a bread bin. It has a high, sloping front, a flat automatic sheet feeder at the rear and a transparent copy holder jutting out of the top. Paper is loaded into either the manual or sheet feeders and dropped into the copy holder after printing. At least, that's the idea.

When using the automatic sheet feeder, I could not persuade the JP360 to feed one single piece of paper up as far as the printing head. The sheet would always jam at some point on its journey through the feeding mechanism. The manual states that only paper under a certain weight can be used with the JP360 but I tried every weight of paper I could find, right down to molecule-thin fax paper. All brought the same unfortunate result.

The manual feeder was a different story though, and I was immediately able to print text from DOS of very good quality, but the real test of the JP360 came under Windows.

The Windows installation program ran easily and instantly replaced my default printer driver. The printer's setup program ran equally smoothly, its front end guiding you through the various printing modes, colour options and image printing issues.

The inkjet cartridges used by the JP360 are small plastic reservoirs of ink with their own printing head built into the base. The ink/head assembly fits easily into a motorised carriage and clicks into place. There was only one slight problem - a very fiddly, flimsy switch which changes between monochrome or colour cartridges.

As a stark contrast to the Citizen PN60, the JP360's ink seemed to last very well. After printing four or five full-colour A4 pictures the ink showed no signs of running out. In fact it was still going strong when the printer was sent back to Olivetti.

Rating: 65%

STAR LC-90

Star Micronics ■ (01494) 471111 ■ £129 + VAT

The early Star printers (like the LC-10) were the cornerstones of the home printing market. They brought cheap, reliable printing to the masses – and Star seem to be continuing that philosophy today. The LC-90 is similar to the LC-10 in many ways. It adopts the same 9-pin dot matrix approach to printing, meaning that the LC-90 will be slow and it will be noisy, but that's okay because it will also be very inexpensive.

The design of Star's printers has also changed dramatically since the LC-10; the flat, squat shape has been ditched in favour of a taller case which seems to contain the inevitable noise of an impact printer.

The output quality of a 9-pin dot matrix printer is also a major issue. The small number of pins makes them less than accurate because to get a decent level of output quality, the paper must be advanced by fractions of an inch to create the illusion of higher density. This makes the resulting output unpredictable as the feeding mechanism cannot be manufactured to a high enough standard to achieve this consistently.

The LC-90 copes with these limitations admirably. It creates good quality output when printing text and manages to print recognisable images without too much trouble, but don't expect miracles.

By far the biggest improvement in this latest Star machine is the sheet feeder. The older models of Star printers all had only two methods of paper delivery; continuous paper or single, manually fed, sheets. The new range features automatic sheet feeders capable of holding up to 55 pages at a time, and they seemed sturdy enough to handle any job I could throw at them.

In keeping with the rest of the machine, the control panel of this printer is also very easy to understand. It features two buttons – the power button and the line-feed button. The only real surprise with the machine's controls is that a time limit sometimes overrides them to switch the printer off when it is idle (even budget printers can be environmentally conscious).



Rating: 75%

STAR LC-100

Star Micronics ■ (01494) 471111 ■ £149 + VAT



The LC-100 is a printer from the old school, using a similar design to the printers Star have manufactured since the late Eighties. It uses the same dot matrix method as the LC-90, at the same 9-pin resolution. In an attempt to outdo its little brother though, it also allows colour printing by using a ribbon which is divided into four colours; cyan, magenta, yellow and black. These are the basic colours involved in mechanised printing – in fact this magazine is composed of those same four hues.

The Star relies on printing these colours – one on top of the other, to create a colour image on a page. The result is an approximation of the image on the screen, but just like the LC-90 you should not expect photo-realism.

The LC-100 supports the same monochrome printing features as the LC-90, but it lacks the natty sheet-feeder of the LC-90's new-design case. This leaves you with two options, the first is a single sheet manual feeder, which means you must introduce each new sheet of paper by hand as it is needed. The second option is the tractor-feeder which requires paper with holes on either side of the page for the LC-100 to use as grips when advancing the page. Neither choice is particularly appealing as the single sheet feeder requires you to sit by your printer feeding it sheet after sheet, whilst the other requires expensive tractor-fed paper.

If you are in the market for a budget end printer then the choice must be between the three Star printers. Only two of these support colour printing, and of these the LC-240 offers the best quality output. Having said this, the LC-100 seems to make a surprisingly good job of it for the price. Print quality was almost identical to the LC-90, but the added ability to print in colour opens your documents up to new realms of creative freedom. The LC-100 is still way behind higher resolution printers like the Projet IIC and JP360, but if you want a workhorse printer and aren't too bothered by speed or blinding beauty, then this is your man.

Rating: 75%

STAR LC240C

Star Micronics ■ (01494) 471111 ■ £169 + VAT

The LC240C is a colour dot-matrix printer from the same manufacturer as the LC90 and LC100C. It uses the same case design and handy sheet feeder as the LC90, but improves on the print quality of its smaller brother by increasing its printing resolution to 24 pins. These act in just the same way as a 9-pin dot matrix, but the results are far more accurate.

Like the LC90, the 240C sports just two controls on its front panel, one controlling paper feeding, and the other switching the power on and off. All of the rest of the printer's features are controlled by the printer driver software, so all you need to do is point and click to set your favourite printing options. Collections of frequently used configurations can be saved to disk for easy access at a later date, and the whole software package seems to run very smoothly.

When printing *Word* documents, the 240C seems to have an easy time. The print is clear and accurate enough, although nowhere near as accurate as a laser. This high quality print is due to the 360DPI maximum resolution of the printer, better than most of the bubble jet printers reviewed here – and even better than some of the older laser printers, like the Hewlett-Packard Laser Jet 3.

Image printing is not quite as painless, a colour picture can be transferred onto the page in around one and a half minutes, but the image is recognisable and does not appear too badly banded – considering that the 240C is a dot-matrix printer. The ink ribbons also last for quite a long time, in fact I could barely make an impact (pardon the pun) on the ribbon during the tests I ran. Having said this, the printer does have a tendency to lock up when it encounters a kink in the printing ribbon. This produces an ugly grinding noise, followed by a total halt to printing.

All in all, the Star LC240C is one of the best dot-matrix printers available. Its colour capabilities aside, it creates good text output and recognisable graphics, but at the end of the day it is still a dot-matrix printer and will always be outperformed by more sophisticated methods.



Rating: 85%

STAR SJ-144

Star Micronics Ltd ■ (01494) 471111 ■ £249



What are small business operators to do, especially those who work from home? Space is usually limited, as are funds, of course. But good quality printed output is essential if you want a professional appearance.

Well, Star Micronics Co Ltd's Star SJ-144 could be the solution. The SJ-144 is a full colour, thermal transfer printer, light in weight and tight in space, while, at the same time, being easy on the budget.

Fitted out with three paper feeds – front and rear single sheet feeds and an automatic sheet feeder capable of holding about 30 pages, the SJ-144 will capably print on paper, labels, envelopes, postcards or overhead projection film. It can handle materials from 3.94 to 9.53 inches wide by 3.94 to 14.0 inches long and from 0.06mm to 0.10mm thick.

Like so many of today's printers, the SJ-144 includes a two page on one mode, printing your document in condensed format to allow two pages to print on a single sheet. For added economy, a zoom feature allows documents to be printed at either 80, 67 or 50% of actual size.

Software can be set to run the SJ-144 or any of several emulations – including the Star SJ-48, NX-2420, LC 24-200, NX-2430 and LC 24-20, the Epson LQ 860 and LQ 850, the IBM Proprinter X24E and X24 and any of the NEC 24-pin graphics printers. Eight resident fonts are built in to the machine. A special driver for Windows 3.1 is included with the SJ-144 and includes 15 TrueType fonts.

On my colour graphics test, with a one quarter page full colour graphic and several lines of colour text, the banding was minimal. Cost per colour page is 50-75 pence according to the manufacturer.

On my text-only, black and white page, letters were well formed, if somewhat lacking in density, especially at the larger type faces. The full page of about 40 lines of various fonts took about two minutes to print. Star Micronics estimate monochrome print cost is 2-3 pence per page.

At £249, it's a decent low-end machine, but needs improved density to turn it into a must-have.

Rating: 79%

Product Reviews

PC POWER's resident techno-boffin Jon Pyle casts an eager eye over this month's sackload of plug-in bits and bobs.

Sony SRS PC-50 Speakers

Sony • (01932) 816000
• £79.99

The Sony SRS PC-50 speakers are small, flat, upright units which fit to either side of your monitor on two sticky-mounted clips, making it look like your monitor has ears. In the past I have laughed unreservedly at the idea that you can mount a speaker on a monitor with just two bits of sticky tape. Our production editor, Steve Hill, once used such a pair of speakers for two weeks. His work was constantly being interrupted by the thudding noise of speakers landing on his desk, and ever since, the PC POWER team have given up on the idea.

The Sonys seem to be a different story, they managed to stay put throughout testing, despite people jogging the desk and nudging them as they passed. They are capable of

pumping out a not exactly ear-bursting five watts of stereo sound. To their credit though, they do manage to reproduce bass sounds just as well as higher frequency, tinny sounds. This is definitely not a feat achieved by many PC speakers.

The Sonys are sensibly shielded to stop them corrupting any nearby disks, and they feature a handy secondary input which allows you to plug a portable CD player or Walkman into them without having to disconnect your PC. They also have easily reached bass and volume controls on the right hand speaker, but no balance control.

The only real problem with these speakers is their maximum volume. I'm sure that with a better amplifier the speakers themselves would still



have coped with the workload, but Sony seem to have nervously put an amplifying circuit from a child's Musical Major Morgan into what would have otherwise been an admirable pair of speakers. Still, if

shaking the floorboards is not high on your list of priorities, then these guys should give you no trouble.

POWER RATING 75%

Creative Labs Prodigital Speakers

Creative • (01734) 344744
• £34.99

The Creative Prodigitals are amplified stereo PC speakers with a no nonsense design. Two wires hang out of the right hand speaker; one input wire which plugs

into the PC, and another which connects to the left speaker. There are only two controls; volume for the left and right speakers.

When I first lifted the box containing these speakers, I thought - I'm going to enjoy this. For starters, the speakers are from Creative Labs, the famous PC sound gurus. Secondly, the box wasn't very large, but it was very heavy. I unpacked them with great anticipation and, as I lifted the first of the two speakers out of the box, I heard a quiet *bong* noise from somewhere on the floor. Looking down to check out the cause of the

sound, I found the wire mesh had fallen off the left speaker before I could even get it out of the packaging. This, in my opinion, was not meant to happen.

So what if they fall to pieces? They can still play loud and clear, right? Wrong. The Prodigitals utterly failed to shake the room, managing to just about equal the noise made by non-amplified speakers. I was utterly crestfallen by now; my illusions shattered, I turned the speakers down to half-volume. At this point something really weird happened. The left speaker refused to make

any noise, while the right speaker carried on as normal. Some further twiddling revealed that the left control only worked when it was turned to at least three quarter volume, otherwise that speaker was totally silent.

The Prodigitals are not very attractively packaged, their build quality is shoddy (ie they fall apart), and even when they do work, the results are not very pleasing. Quite frankly, the life expectancy of these speakers is best measured with a stopwatch.

POWER RATING 27%



Gravis Analog Pro Joystick

Advanced Gravis • (01604) 768711 • £39.99

The Analog Pro is, at first glance, an uncomplicated stick with two thumb-controlled fire buttons, one trigger and two base-mounted

fire buttons – just like in the arcades. It has a very sturdy foam-covered handle which refused to break, despite our best efforts to do so (we

always try to break a new joystick, just to see if it can take the heat).

Depending on your preference and level of fitness, the Analog Pro's handling can be changed by turning a huge plastic wheel in the base. Level one makes the joystick so limp that it does not even return to the centre when left untouched. Level two adds auto-centring, but the stick still doesn't put up much of a struggle. Finally, level three makes the joystick snap back to the centre, giving you instant control and chronic wrist ache (no change there then – Ed).

As well as the rotating base control, three other rollers allow you to configure the two base buttons to act as button 1 (normally on the trigger finger), button 2 (normally on the

thumb), button 3 (normally on the base) or button 4 (also on the base). The last control is a variable throttle which is in such a tricky place (left hand side of the base, in the centre) that using it for anything other than the most gentle flight simulators will require some dedicated practice.

To its credit, the 'stick calibrates perfectly every time and could not be persuaded to drift after it had been set up. For *IndyCar Racing*, the Gravis seems to react perfectly. It has a positive feel which lets you know when you are steering, braking or accelerating, so driving yourself off the track is only a remote possibility.

Recommended!

POWER RATING 85%



Sony CSS-B100

Sony • (01932) 816000 • £85 + VAT

This is not your usual stereo PC speaker outfit. The main reason for this is that it's a flat unit with stereo speakers on the front, and a large blank space at the back. This forms a platform on which your monitor sits, supported by four sturdy plastic legs.

The front panel has three controls: a power switch, a volume slider and a bass boost slider. The whole unit is powered by a single 9 volt adapter, so you shouldn't expect it to make your ears bleed.

In the centre of the front panel is a small cover which drops down to reveal some sockets which you would not normally see on a set of PC speakers. The first is a head-phone socket, perhaps not an amazing break with tradition, but still a

sensible idea. The second is a socket for a secondary input, so you can plug in a Walkman or CD player, overriding the computer's sound. The third is less obvious, a microphone socket. Have you ever wished that you didn't need to reach round to the back of your PC to connect speakers and the like? Well that's what this is intended to help. The fourth set of inputs are particularly impressive, gold-plated (gold contacts produce less interference) phono sockets allow you to send video pictures and stereo sound through the unit. Why? Well, suppose you have a video digitising card, you could connect the card to the 'video through' port on the rear on the unit, then plug your video/camcorder into the front with-



out having to mess around with the back of your PC. The two input sockets are included for the same reason – multimedia in comfort.

The sound quality from the Sonys, while not very loud, is extremely

crisp and clear with an acceptable amount of bass, no doubt provided by the huge empty expanse which the monitor sits on.

POWER RATING 90%

Wave System

Supplier: Richard Watts Associates

• (01525) 372621 • £159.99

Terratec's Wave System is a daughterboard, that is, a small circuit board which connects to your existing hardware. This particular board connects to a Sound Blaster 16 or compatible sound card via a single connector on its base. To fit the board, you just need to open the machine and find your sound card. Then find the small rectangular connector, plug the two together and close the machine again; after this the Wave System will automatically do its job.

What the Wave System actually does is to effectively make the AdLib or FM part of any Sound Blaster 16 style card totally obsolete. It is

replaced by some beautifully sampled sounds of real instruments. So when a game is trying to make a sound like a flute, instead of making a sad AdLib honking noise, a sampled recording of a flute drifts gently from your speakers. Most games support this type of music through either a 'General MIDI' or 'WaveBlaster' option.

To be blunt, this card is not a new idea, it's a copy of Creative Labs WaveBlaster, but manufactured in Germany and sold at a lower price. The sound samples used by Terratec's card are just as well recorded and sensibly arranged as Creative's, and the board is just as

compatible as the real WaveBlaster. The only real difference between the two is the software.

To set up the Wave System to play MIDI music under Windows is no mean feat as the Windows 3.11 MIDI-mapper is notoriously picky when it comes to recognising hardware. Once you've managed it though, the free 'Procyon' MIDI software from GoldStar does a sterling job, allowing you to edit existing MIDI songs and create your own compositions.

The only aspect which worries me about this type of add-on is the tendency for the card to fail detection tests by games. Both the WaveBlaster and the Wave System



suffer the same problem, and *Descent* (the best game ever, in my opinion) has just such a problem. Its setup program refuses to admit that a general MIDI device is connected and can only stretch to the unpleasant squeaky AdLib standard. Having said this, the only real alternative is to buy an AWE32, and that will require a lot more money.

POWER RATING 75%

Carrera P75

Carrera Technology • (0171) 830 0586 • £1785 + VAT

We asked the well known PC manufacturer Carrera to build a high-end Pentium machine to our own specifications, and the result was this baby. A Pentium processor running at 75MHz with an 895Mb hard disk, ultra-turbo-mega-super graphics card, double speed CD-ROM drive, US Robotics Sportster 288 fax/modem and a humble Sound Blaster 16 as its sound system (it's all you need unless you're looking for a PC that's also a professional MIDI instrument).

The first and most important difference between this PC and previous models is not the processor, but the motherboard it is attached to. The code name of this all-important circuit board is Triton.

Triton was developed by Intel as a response to the meteoric rise in processor power since the Pentium was released. This increase in speed has presented motherboard designers with a bit of a problem – the processor is running at such a phenomenal rate that the rest of the machine struggles to keep up, thereby slowing down the whole machine. Triton has been designed with a single goal in mind – getting as much information in and out of the processor as possible, so it is less likely to be held up by the memory and peripherals which share space on its motherboard.

A new type of memory, called EDO RAM, is central to this approach. EDO stands for Enhanced Data Out which gives a bit of a clue as to what separates these chips from their predecessors. Before any RAM chip will allow data to be read from its circuits, it must first establish a link with the piece of hardware which is expected to receive that data. With previous chips, this needed to be done for every item of data individually, so to copy two megabytes of information, this process might need to be repeated some 500 times in a 32-bit machine.

EDO removes much of this workload by copying blocks of information at a time, so to copy two megabytes in a Triton machine requires the initialisation process to be completed only once. Intel quote an average performance increase of 22% over normal RAM when using EDO, so you can expect to see more and more manufacturers jumping onto the Triton bandwagon.

As well as the improved memory features of Triton, it is said to be 'P6-ready'. Remember just before the Pentium was released, machines were being touted as 'Pentium-ready'. Well, Intel's new processor, the P6, is pretty much finished, so be prepared for a new generation of machines sporting the new processor (and the price-cuts in older

machines which always happen when a new processor is introduced). The Triton motherboard used by Carrera can support a processor running at up to 120Mhz, so there are plenty of options should you choose to improve the machine at a later date.

Stealth bomber

The Carrera PC's performance is no doubt partly due to the Triton motherboard, but there is more to this system than just Intel's work. The Stealth 64 PCI 2Mb graphics card makes using Windows a totally new experience. It features a Windows accelerator – a small piece of electronics which takes over the task of copying images onto the screen, freeing up the processor for more important jobs. The end result is a display which updates instantly. Normally you can see a large area of the screen being filled in, line by line, but with the Stealth 64, entire 800x600x16million screens appear in the blink of an eye.

Another aspect of this machine which Carrera have decided to include is Enhanced IDE. EIDE is the latest hard disk controlling mechanism for PCs. Released as a response to the lightning fast SCSI2-

Fast standard, EIDE does not achieve the same performance, but it doesn't cost anywhere near as much either. The increased data transfer supplied by EIDE is another revelation for Windows users. Disk-swapping times are greatly reduced by the new controller, making more efficient use of the hard drive's internal cache memory and squirting data back and forth at an alarming rate.

The Carrera's CD-ROM drive is controlled by the same EIDE controller as the hard disk, so not only does this reduce the machine's cost by removing the need for a CD-ROM controller on the sound card, but it also increases performance by lowering the drive's seek time (the average time taken for the drive's head to move from one area of the disk to another).

The Goldstar monitor included with the system is pretty sexy too. It supports just about every screen mode the Stealth 64 can throw at it (few other monitors could cope), holds a very steady picture and includes pollution-preventing measures such as automatic power saving.

The Sportster modem came with its own fax and communications software which worked very smoothly and above all quickly. It comes with a special offer of two months' Internet access for £49.99, supports fax transmission at up to 14,400 baud and fits internally to the machine, so there's no need for it to use up one of your COM ports.

Making a flap

There is only one very small niggle I could find to make about the Carrera. The mini-tower case has a small hinged door covering about two thirds of its front. This covers the floppy and CD drives and the reset and power switches, and can become very annoying as it tends to swing closed over the drives meaning you have to shove it out of the way every time you insert a disk. Then again, as Carrera's PR guy Colin Collier enthusiastically pointed out, in a business environment this is a useful feature as it presents a visible deterrent to anyone who wants to get near your data. Likewise, in a home environment it stops the kids being able to plant jam sandwiches in the CD drive while you're not looking. While these are valid points, I still found the door a pain (sorry Colin) and plan to remove it as soon as possible.



Saints preserve us! A Pentium machine which doesn't blow up, melt or add up wrong, and even manages to run our games without Jon having to totally rewrite all the system software! What will they think of next?

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Hayes Accura 288 Modem

Hayes • (01252) 275500 • £179

Hayes modems have been around for one heck of a long time. Their name has dominated the communications industry for so long that the Hayes command set has become *the* standard way for a computer to interface with a modem. So when you buy a Hayes modem, you can expect to get an extremely compatible package. The Accura 288 quotes compatibility with no less than 17 international standards from 4,800 baud fax transmission to 28,800 baud modem connections. Some of the older standards are no longer in use, but at least you know they are available should you ever need them.

The Hayes Accura 288 fax/modem is a flat rectangular grey box, 9" long by 6" wide, with the obligatory small panel of lights mounted on its front. These lights appear on the front panels of most modems but their function is not often explained. On the Accura, the eight lights are labelled hs, aa, cd, oh, rd, sd, tr and mr. When lit, they denote high speed transmission, automatic answering of incoming calls, carrier detection (means that another modem has been reached), off-hook (no call is being made), received data, sent data, terminal ready (used only by RS232 devices such as text terminals) and modem ready (the power light) respectively.

Purple Hayes

Until reading the detailed, and succinct, documentation for the Hayes Accura, I had never managed to decipher all of the lights on any modem. As a case in point, US Robotics are famous for plastering their equipment with a display that rivals the Blackpool illuminations, without actually explaining their function.

The manual for the Accura 288 goes into far more detail than this though, and gives a full listing of the modem's commands and a listing of the error codes it can report. More importantly though, it also gives step-by-step instructions on how to connect the modem, with an annotated diagram for each stage. It even shows how to connect the modem in a selection of different countries. The end result is more of a guide to using any modem rather than a few

hints on connecting the Accura.

The capabilities of the Accura are just as impressive as its manual. It can transmit faxes at up to 14,400 baud (providing the receiving hardware can handle it), and it acts as a 28,800 baud modem. This speed can be further supplemented by using the Accura's built-in error correction and data compression features. Error correction attempts to fix faulty data as it is received, the alternative is to ask the other modem to send it again, meaning that valuable line time is wasted while re-sending the same data. The data compression feature encodes any data sent into a smaller form, further reducing the amount of line time needed. These functions are achieved through the V42, MNP2, 3, and 4 error correction standards, and the V42bis and MNP5 data compression standards. These processes had to be standardised or a situation might have arisen where one modem would be incapable of speaking to another.

To get started in the daunting world of communications, the Accura comes with two of Hayes' own packages. Hayes™ Smartcom™ Fax for Windows™ (the title of the manual is all but obscured by ™s) is a small

program which runs automatically when you start Windows. Once installed, it sits around waiting, either for a fax machine to call in, using the auto-answer feature of the Accura, or for you to send a fax. This process could not be easier; the fax acts as if it were a printer, so you can print a Word document directly to the Smartcom program. Doing so brings up a requester which prompts you to type in the number of the fax machine to send to, all you need to do is type this in and press return.

The second package included is Hayes™ Smartcom™ LE for Windows™ (Hayes' legal department is obviously staffed by some very nervous people). Smartcom is a communications package which allows you to dial up another modem directly, this means that you can dial bulletin boards and your friends' computers without using a network such as Compuserve or the Internet. The trouble with such packages is that they are almost always extremely difficult to use. They use communications terminology that leaves the layman bewildered and unsure of what their modem is actually up to. Smartcom is not such a package, it describes every step of connecting to the remote modem in illustrated



stages with friendly-looking cartoon telephones and plenty of on-line help. The first number that Smartcom suggests you should ring is Hayes' own bulletin board, 'Online with Hayes'. Despite being an American number, there is a toll-free line to the board meaning that you can download upgrades to your communications software without costing yourself a penny.

The Accura is an extremely well-packaged product. The manual covers simple tasks like connecting the computer and modem together in enough detail to satisfy a new user, but it also has enough technical detail to give more experienced users the information they need. The software is competently written and well thought through. The modem's high speed and wide range of compatible standards leaves me with no alternative but to recommend it.

POWER RATING 93%

Ace Coin Movie Master 24

Ace Coin • (0191) 529 3333 • £352

For the uninitiated, an MPEG card allows you to play music videos and the latest film releases from your PC. The resulting images are displayed at higher quality than a TV set and feature CD-quality digital stereo sound. Video CDs do not deteriorate to the same extent as VHS videos (providing you don't scratch them), and with a little extra software you can dismantle the soundtrack and images and use them to your own ends (providing you don't break any copyright laws in the process).

The Ace Coin MM24 is an important step in the evolution of MPEG. It has not been around for long, but is already earning itself a reputation as

one of the most affordable and practical MPEG cards available, but what do you get for your money?

The MM24 is compatible with both of the leading video CD standards (ISO 11172 and White Book). It displays images at incredible colour resolutions (up to 16.8 million colours on screen), and allows the videos to be zoomed in and out from 22x22 pixels (thumbnail size) right up to 16 times zoom (16 times the size of the screen). It allows the video image to be incorporated into your computer's display in one of two ways – colour or chroma keying – both of which can be configured by the user, and it allows the current frame of video to be 'grabbed'; that

is, saved as an individual image file for later use.

Installing the MM24 is very easy when compared to other MPEG cards. It plugs into any 16-bit ISA slot (you don't even need PCI or VL-bus PC) and connects to the existing video card via a VGA feature connector. This allows the MPEG card to synchronise its display with that of your video card and pinch its video signal for use by the MPEG hardware. This pinching of the video signal means that the monitor connector must be moved from the video card to the rear of the MPEG card, but after that no other hardware changes are needed. Some other MPEG cards I could mention require a 'loop-back' connector which steals the video signal from the monitor socket of your display adapter and pipes it into the MPEG card. This is usually a cheaper option, but it increases the effort involved when installing the card.

The last phase of installation is to drop the software into your machine. A simple Windows installation program performs this task automatically, leaving you with a program group containing the MPEG player software. All MPEG players use their own software to control the card, but this is soon to change when a new MPEG standard called Penguin is released, but until next month's MPEG feature is complete we are not

at liberty to say too much about this.

The quality of playback delivered by the MM24 is as near to perfect as MPEG allows. The image manages not to break up, as it can with many cards of this type, and the 24-bit colour resolution means that it does not suffer from the unfortunate blobs of colour which appear on 256-colour cards. The image grabber produces faithful reproductions of the picture, whether the video is paused or not, and the sound quality is incredibly good, as it should be when spooled from CD.

The easy installation and hassle-free operation of the MM24 made it an instant hit with me. As far as MPEG cards go, the MM24 is a cheap option when you consider the high quality images it produces, but there is one thing which worries me – why pay £350 for an MPEG card when a perfectly good video will not set you back as much? To be fair to Ace Coin though, the problem is not with the MM24 specifically, more with MPEG in general. As MPEG becomes more widely used by the PC-owning community though, I'm sure that increased demand and production will drive these costs down, leaving us with new opportunities for full motion games, interactive films and music videos.

Recommended!

POWER RATING 85%



Canon BJ30

Canon • (0181) 773 3173 • £199

The Canon BJ30 is a compact bubble jet printer with an attractive design. It folds down to a tiny, flat unit measuring only 1" high by 5" deep and 10" wide. Strangely though, the BJ30 is not a portable printer. It comes supplied with an AC mains adapter, but no battery pack, although Canon may be planning to release one.

The BJ30 has a number of impressive features which you would normally expect to see in a printer twice its size. With a maximum printing resolution of 360 dots per inch and an automatic 100 sheet paper feeder, the BJ can print at professional quality and be left alone to do the job by itself. If you can get it to print, that is.

The big problem when using the BJ30 was installing the drivers. Usually this is a one-step process handled by a small installation program, and doesn't usually need any information provided to that program. With the BJ30, this was not the case. To their credit, Canon have included specific drivers for AutoCAD 12,

Harvard Graphics v3.x, Lotus 1-2-3 v2 to v3, Lotus Freelance 4, Word for DOS v5.0 to v6.0, Wordperfect v5.1 to v6, Works v2 and 3 and of course Windows 3.1. This added complexity was bound to involve some extra twiddling around while the necessary drivers are installed, but Canon's installer really makes a meal of what should be a simple process.

While trying to install just the Windows driver, I started the installation only to be told that the process would involve writing to the floppy drive. So the disk's contents were cautiously copied to the PC's C: drive and the installation program then run from there. This worked fine up to a point; that point was when the installer suddenly stopped without indicating whether the installation was successful or not. On checking the root of the C: drive (the installer would only run from C:\ or A:\), it was discovered that the program had removed not only itself from the drive, but had taken the CONFIG.SYS and AUTOEXEC.BAT files with it!



After reconstructing the startup files, the installation disk was backed up to the C:\TEMP directory and the installation procedure run from the floppy with the write-protect tab closed. This was almost as disastrous as the previous attempts. Again, the installation ran fine up to a point; this time, that point was when the program reported an error writing to drive A, then suddenly dropped back to the DOS prompt. On examining the floppy's contents, I found that every single file had totally disappeared!

After deciding to give the installer a miss, the original files were returned to the floppy from C:\TEMP

and the installation process carried out by hand, but most users would not know how to do this for the simple reason that they shouldn't have to.

After the nightmare of installing the BJ30, using it was extremely easy. The sheet feeder worked without a single glitch, and both graphic and text printing were accurate and well presented. In my opinion though, all of the points in the BJ30's favour are overshadowed by its incredibly volatile installation software – all I can say is sack that programmer.

POWER RATING 50%

Hit the BOARD

Shareware. Sharewhere? Geoff Spick tracks some down in his amazing world.

If you don't have access to a system like CompuServe which offers all the latest shareware on a plate, then actually getting your mitts on shareware with your modem can be quite a task. The next best place to look is obviously a decent bulletin board. Most of the commercial boards get the latest shareware on the day of release, although if a really big title is coming out then the major boards are likely to get swamped. For instance, the day *Doom* came out, the American system that played host to iD Software collapsed under the amount of e-mail being sent asking why the game wasn't available. The reason the game wasn't to be found was that with the system crashed, the distributors couldn't upload it. Eventually, a plea by e-mail got everyone to calm down while the game was electronically distributed, and the rest is history.

For the braver souls out there, the Internet is becoming an increasingly popular way of getting shareware, with FTP sites all over the world setting aside space for software which

can be downloaded. Of course, the price for this is sacrificing your reasonably safe and reliable X-modem transfers for intercontinental Internet wizardry.

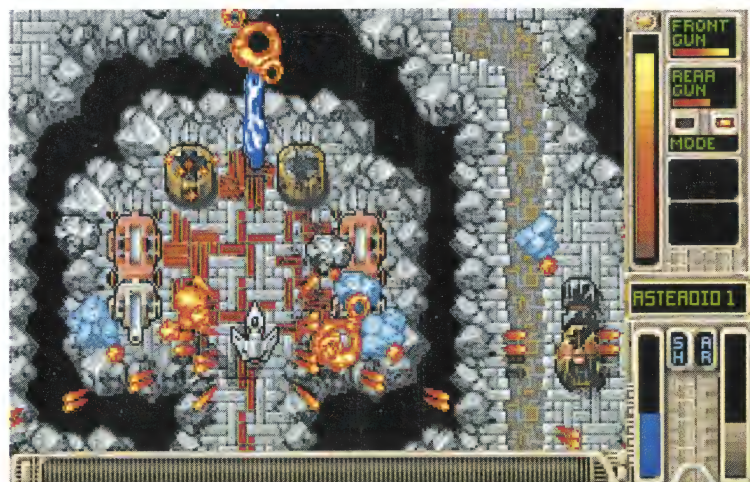
If you can't find a piece of shareware from a renowned company anywhere then you could always ring up their sales line and see if they stock the shareware version of a game. For shareware from lesser known companies or individuals, your best bet may be the shareware adverts in this magazine. The information superhighway may be growing but sometimes it's good to talk.

Where the Internet does have a large advantage over other systems is that through the usenet newsgroups you can find out about all manner of shareware products that you'd normally never hear of. Through usenet you can find out where to get hold of them and also talk to other users if you experience problems. Groups such as **alt.comp.shareware** carry a mix of games and serious shareware threads while **alt.games.apogee** is currently dedicated to *Rise Of The Triad* mania with lots of posts dedicated to the latest *Doomesque* blast fest.

Lurking on the boards this month have been a vast array of *Doom* and *Heretic* WAD files that will challenge surely the most hardened and skilled fanatics. Along with the WADs are the usual battery of game editors and enhancers. *Tyrian* from Epic is being previewed on their



Top title screen action drags you into the game (or something).



Tyrian, Tyrian, Tyrian, it's all I ever hear. When's someone going to do a decent conversion of *R-Type*, eh? Eh? Eh?



Tyrian's Battlestar Galactica-esque spaceship comes under attack from murderous giant sprouts. Now, that's one amazing world!

CompuServe forum, and is a futuristic vertical shoot-'em-up featuring colourful graphics, devastating weaponry, huge enemy craft, bonuses galore and some fiendish level design. Only preview screenshots are currently available but this looks like being another hit for Epic and a much needed boost in the regular shoot-'em-up stakes, with only *Raptor* coming to mind as a recent example. Other news from Epic is the forthcoming *Jazz Jackrabbit* CD

and *One Must Fall 2097* network play version.

Thanks to the growing use of modems and communications, shareware companies can react far more quickly to their users' suggestions, make improvements and alterations to their games and get them out to the marketplace a lot faster.

Geoff Spick is a regular contributor to Internet & Comms Today and CD-ROM User. He's also a big fan of Skid Row. Hmm.



Left-Overs Sharks!

Astrion • (0181) 202 0011 • £39.99



Astrion have just secured the rights to distribute the Discovery Channel's series of interactive multimedia titles, the best of the current crop is *Sharks!* – a stunning collection of Sharkabilia that will serve as the perfect learning tool for naturalists everywhere, much like David Attenborough's *Life on Earth* videos, except in the case of *Sharks!* you choose where to point the camera.

The game is divided into seven main categories: a shark's life, people and sharks, the shark body, about sharks, ask the experts, shark tag and video gallery. Each contains hundreds of written and pictorial references to sharks in all their shapes and forms. Each single member of the shark family is explained in detail, with diagrams, feeding habits, combat, sensory perception – in fact there isn't a single aspect of these sometimes ferocious creatures that hasn't been covered in-depth – there's even a probing interview with *Jaws* author, Peter Benchely, and tons of footage of shark attacks, wounds, and encounters in the deep. Some of the material is not for the faint-hearted but that's not to say it's sensationalist.

Sharks! is an extremely well documented piece of multimedia software that instantly captures the imagination with its fantastic images and educates anyone with an interest in the subject matter. The pictures are all crystal clear and although the FMV can be sketchy sometimes, this is generally the fault of the source, and in fact adds to the atmosphere of the package.

If this is an example of the Discovery series then I can see no reason why it won't appeal to everyone with an interest in natural history – in fact *Sharks!* is an authoritative piece that is perfect for educating children and adults alike. Every school should have access to a CD-ROM and a set of these CDs, although there should be a heavy discount for educational uses, as £39.99 is a little steep. The best thing since Dorling Kindersley.

Damian Butt

94%

386 DX PCs

| | Processor speed (MHz) | Floppy/hard drive capacity (Mb) | Hard disk cache | Cache RAM | RAM (fitted/max) | Monitor | Ports (Parallel, Serial) | Case types (Slim Desktop, Mini tower, Tower) | Free slots | Free drive bays (3.5") | Free drive bays (5.25") | Price | Supplier | Tel |
|--------------|-----------------------|---------------------------------|-----------------|-----------|------------------|----------|--------------------------|--|------------|------------------------|-------------------------|--------|--------------------|----------------|
| Akhter LC | 40 | 1.44, 40 | | 128k | 2 (16) | 14" VGA | 1P, 2S | D | 4 | 0 | 1 | £950 | Akhter | (01279) 443521 |
| CI Leo | 40 | 1.44, 80 | | | 4 (32) | 14" SVGA | 1P, 2S | D | 2 | 1 | 2 | £1,050 | Centerprise | (01256) 463754 |
| Escom 386DX | 40 | 1.44, 170 | | 128k | 4 (32) | 14" SVGA | 1P, 2S | D | 4 | 1 | 2 | £680 | Escom | (0800) 665500 |
| Oasis DX | 40 | 1.44, 107 | | 64k | 2 (16) | 14" SVGA | 1P, 2S | SDMT | 4 | 0/1 | 0/3 | £799 | Oasis Computers | (01458) 835061 |
| Perfecta 40 | 40 | 1.44, 105 | | 64k | 4 (32) | 14" SVGA | 1P, 2S | DM | 2/5 | 0 | 1/2 | £889 | Watford Electrnics | (01582) 487777 |
| Vale Popular | 40 | 1.44, 120 | | 128k | 4 (16) | 14" SVGA | 1P, 1S | D | 5 | 0 | 1 | £769 | Evesham Micros | (01386) 765500 |

486 SX PCs

| | Processor speed (MHz) | Floppy/hard drive capacity (Mb) | Hard disk cache | Cache RAM | RAM (fitted/max) | Monitor | Ports (Parallel, Serial) | Case types (Slim Desktop, Mini tower, Tower) | Free slots | Free drive bays (3.5") | Free drive bays (5.25") | Price | Supplier | Tel |
|-------------------|-----------------------|---------------------------------|-----------------|-----------|------------------|-------------|--------------------------|--|------------|------------------------|-------------------------|--------|--------------------|-----------------|
| Akhter LC-25L | 25 | 1.44, 105 | | 128k | 4 (32) | 14" SVGA | 1P, 2S | DMT | 4 | 0/1 | 1/2 | £1,162 | Akhter Cmputrs | (01279) 443521 |
| CI Leo | 25 | 1.44, 80 | | | 4 (32) | 14" SVGA | 1P, 2S | D | 2 | 1 | 2 | £1,095 | Centerprise | (01256) 463754 |
| CI Leo | 25 | 1.44, 80 | | | 4 (32) | 14" SVGA | 1P, 2S | D | 2 | 1 | 2 | £1,190 | Centerprise | (01256) 463754 |
| Compaq Prolinea | 25 | 1.44, 120 | | | 4 (64) | 14" SVGA | 1P, 2S | S | 4 | 1 | 0 | £1,200 | Compaq | (0181) 332 3000 |
| Compusys VESA | 25 | 1.44, 85 | | 256k | 4 (64) | 14" SVGA | 1P, 2S | D | 4 | 0 | 1 | £1,249 | Compusys | (01296) 395531 |
| Dan for Windows | 25 | 1.44, 210 | | 256k | 8 (64) | 14" XGA | 1P, 2S | DMT | 2/5 | 0/1 | 1/3 | £1,372 | Dan Technology | (0181) 902 9922 |
| Dell System 425 | 25 | 1.44, 80 | | | 4 (64) | 14" SVGA | 1P, 2S | SD | 3/6 | 0 | 2/3 | £1,009 | Dell Cmptr Corp | (01344) 720203 |
| Dell System 433 | 33 | 1.44, 80 | | | 4 (64) | 14" SVGA | 1P, 2S | SD | 3/6 | 0 | 2/3 | £1,089 | Dell Cmptr Corp | (01344) 720203 |
| Elonex PC-425X | 25 | 1.44, 85 | | 64k | 4 (32) | 14" SVGA | 1P, 2S | SD | 3/5 | 0/1 | 1/2 | £1,095 | Elonex PLC | (0181) 452 4444 |
| Elinx PC-425XEL | 25 | 1.44, 85 | | 64k | 4 (32) | 14" SVGA | 1P, 2S | SD | 3/5 | 0/1 | 1/2 | £935 | Elonex PLC | (0181) 452 4444 |
| ElxPC425XLAN | 25 | | | | 2 (32) | 14" SVGA | 1P, 2S | S | 0 | 1 | 0 | £885 | Elonex PLC | (0181) 452 4444 |
| ElinxPC433ILAN | 33 | | | | 2 (32) | 14" SVGA | 1P, 2S | S | 0 | 1 | 0 | £1,025 | Elonex PLC | (0181) 452 4444 |
| Escom 486SX | 25 | 1.44, 170 | | | 4 (32) | 14" SVGA | 1P, 2S | D | 4 | 1 | 2 | £1,003 | Escom | (01800) 665500 |
| Haval PC433S | 33 | 1.44, 129 | | | 4 (32) | 14" SVGA | 1P, 2S | SD | 4/6 | 0/1 | 3 | £1,100 | Paragon Technol | (0121) 326 6363 |
| Haval PC433SL | 33 | 1.44, 170 | | 256k | 4 (32) | 14" SVGA | 1P, 2S | DMT | 6 | 0 | 2/6 | £1,115 | Paragon Technol | (0121) 326 6363 |
| ICL D33/25 | 25 | 1.44, 85 | | | 4 (32) | 14" SVGA | 1P, 2S | D | 4 | 1 | 1 | £1,295 | Technology PLC | (01925) 830404 |
| ICL D4/33XG | 33 | 1.44, 120 | | | 8 (32) | 14" SVGA | 1P, 2S | D | 4 | 1 | 1 | £2,095 | Technology PLC | (01925) 830404 |
| Kamco CAD | 33 | 1.44, 245 | VL | 256k | 8 (32) | 17" FST XGA | 1P, 2S | D | 6 | 0 | 1 | £2,195 | Kamco | (01895) 271919 |
| Kamco Classic | 25 | 1.44, 170 | VL | 64k | 4 (32) | 14" SVGA | 1P, 2S | D | 3 | 0 | 1 | £1,095 | Kamco | (01895) 271919 |
| KmcoClassicWin | 25 | 1.44, 170 | VL | 256k | 4 (32) | 15" FST XGA | 1P, 2S | D | 6 | 0 | 1 | £1,495 | Kamco | (01895) 271919 |
| KamcoK433LB | 25 | 1.44, 170 | VL | 256k | 4 (32) | 14" XGA | 1P, 2S | D | 6 | 0 | 1 | £1,095 | Kamco | (01895) 271919 |
| Kamco Ultra | 25 | 1.44, 170 | VL | 256k | 8 (32) | 15" FST XGA | 1P, 2S | D | 6 | 0 | 1 | £1,345 | Kamco | (01895) 271919 |
| Kamco Ultra Win | 25 | 1.44, 170 | VL | 256k | 8 (32) | 15" FST XGA | 1P, 2S | D | 6 | 0 | 1 | £1,675 | Kamco | (01895) 271919 |
| MT 8080-33L | 33 | 1.44, 0 | | 64k | 4 (64) | 14" SVGA | 1P, 2S | D | 5 | 3 | 3 | £1,399 | Memorex Telex | (01734) 441544 |
| Oasis SX | 25 | 1.44, 87 | | 64k | 2 (32) | 14" SVGA | 1P, 2S | SDMT | 5 | 0/1 | 0/3 | £899 | Oasis Computers | (01458) 835061 |
| Olivetti PCX 44 | 25 | 1.44, 105 | | 4 (20) | 14" VGA | 1P, 1S | S | 2 | 0 | 1 | 1 | £1,049 | Olivetti | (0181) 780 8160 |
| Patriot VL | 33 | 1.44, 125 | 1Mb | 256k | 4 (32) | 14" SVGA | 1P, 2S | DT | 4 | 0 | 3/4 | £1,389 | Austin Computers | (01234) 841172 |
| Perfecta 25 | 25 | 1.44, 105 | | 64k | 4 (32) | 14" SVGA | 1P, 2S | DM | 2/5 | 0 | 1/2 | £895 | Watford Electrnics | (01582) 487777 |
| PS 486SX | 25 | 1.44, 85 | | 128k | 4 (32) | 14" SVGA | 1P, 2S | SDMT | 3/6 | 1/2 | 2/3 | £799 | Power Systems | (01452) 831357 |
| Reeves SX25 | 25 | 1.44, 120 | | | 4 (32) | 14" SVGA | 1P, 2S | DM | 4 | 0 | 1 | £849 | Reeves | (01604) 671277 |
| Reeves SX33 | 33 | 1.44, 120 | | | 4 (32) | 14" SVGA | 1P, 2S | DM | 4 | 0 | 1 | £949 | Reeves | (01604) 671277 |
| SC 486SX25 | 25 | 1.44, 105 | | 64k | 4 (32) | 14" SVGA | 1P, 2S | S | 2 | 0 | 0 | £899 | SIR PLC | (01635) 580633 |
| SCB SX | 25 | 1.44, 40 | | 128k | 4 (64) | 14" SVGA | 1P, 2S | M | 4 | 1 | 2 | £749 | SCB Systems | (0181) 298 1114 |
| Trigem 486MM | 25 | 1.44, 42 | | | 4 (64) | 14" SVGA | 1P, 2S | D | 4 | 2 | 1 | £1,070 | Trigem | (01753) 810808 |
| TulipVisLineDC | 25 | 1.44, 60 | | | 4 (16) | 14" SVGA | 1P, 2S | D | 4 | 2 | 1 | £1,400 | Tulip | (01293) 562323 |
| TulipVisLineDC | 25 | 1.44, 120 | | | 4 (64) | 14" SVGA | 1P, 2S | D | 4 | 2 | 1 | £2,100 | Tulip | (01293) 562323 |
| Vale Premier | 25 | 1.44, 120 | 512k | 256k | 4 (32) | 15" SVGA | 1P, 2S | DMT | 5 | 0/1 | 1/3 | £1,349 | Evesham Micros | (01386) 765500 |
| Vale Premier Plus | 25 | 1.44, 120 | 2Mb | 256k | 8 (32) | 15" SVGA | 1P, 2S | DMT | 5 | 0/1 | 1/3 | £1,649 | Evesham Micros | (01386) 765500 |
| Vale Prestige | 25 | 1.44, 85 | | 128k | 4 (32) | 14" SVGA | 1P, 2S | DMT | 5 | 0/1 | 1/3 | £999 | Evesham Micros | (01386) 765500 |
| TFI SX25 | 25 | 1.44, 120 | | 256k | 4 (64) | 14" SVGA | 1P, 2S | DMT | 6 | 1/2 | 2/4 | £969 | Taskforce Technlgn | (01753) 620077 |
| Viglen Genie | 25 | 1.44, 120 | | 64k | 4 (64) | 14" SVGA | 1P, 2S | SD | 2/5 | 0 | 1/2 | £1,098 | Viglen | (0181) 758 7000 |
| Viglen Genie | 25 | 1.44, 200 | | 64k | 8 (64) | 14" SVGA | 1P, 2S | SD | 2/5 | 0 | 1/2 | £1,367 | Viglen | (0181) 758 7000 |
| Vtech | 25 | 1.44, 107 | | 128k | 4 (32) | 14" SVGA | 1P, 2S | D | 4 | 1 | 0 | £1,099 | Vtech | (01800) 773773 |
| Zeno 486 | 25 | 1.44, 80 | | | 4 (16) | 14" SVGA | 1P, 2S | D | 2 | 2 | 2 | £865 | Technology PLC | (01925) 830404 |

486 DX PCs

| | Processor speed (MHz) | Floppy/hard drive capacity (Mb) | Hard disk cache | Cache RAM | RAM (fitted/max) | Monitor | Ports (Parallel, Serial) | Case types (Slim, Mini tower, Tower) | Free slots | Free drive bays (3.5") | Free drive bays (5.25") | Price | Supplier | Tel |
|-------------------|-----------------------|---------------------------------|-----------------|-----------|------------------|-------------|--------------------------|--------------------------------------|------------|------------------------|-------------------------|--------|--------------------|------------------|
| Akhter LC-33L | 33 | 1.44, 105 | | 128k | 4 (32) | 14" SVGA | 1P, 2S | S D M T | 4 | 0/1 | 1 | £1,326 | Akhter Computers | (01279) 443521 |
| Apriocit XEN-PC | 33 | 1.44, 160 | | | 4 (64) | 14" SVGA | 1P, 2S | D | 3 | 0 | 1 | £1,299 | Apriocit Computers | (0121) 717 7171 |
| CI Leo | 33 | 1.44, 80 | | Yes | 4 (32) | 14" SVGA | 1P, 2S | D | 2 | 1 | 2 | £POA | Centerprise | (01256) 463754 |
| Compusys VESA | 33 | 1.44, 85 | | 256k | 4 (64) | 14" SVGA | 1P, 2S | D | 4 | 0 | 1 | £1,399 | Compusys | (01296) 395531 |
| Compusys VESA | 50 | 1.44, 85 | | 256k | 4 (64) | 14" SVGA | 1P, 2S | D | 4 | 0 | 1 | £1,699 | Compusys | (01296) 395531 |
| Dan for Windows | 33 | 1.44, 210 | 2.5Mb | 64k | 8 (64) | 14" XGA | 1P, 2S | D M T | 2/5 | 0/1 | 1/3 | £1,529 | Dan Technology | (0181) 902 9922 |
| Dan Windows Pro | 50 | 1.44, 340 | 2.5Mb | 256k | 8 (64) | 17" XGA | 1P, 2S | D M T | 2/5 | 0/1 | 1/3 | £2,147 | Dan Technology | (0181) 902 9922 |
| Dell System433M | 33 | 1.44, 120 | | | 4 (64) | 14" SVGA | 1P, 2S | S D | 3/6 | 0 | 2/3 | £1,329 | Dell Computer Corp | (01344) 720203 |
| Dell System433T | 33 | 1.44, 120 | | | 8 (64) | 14" SVGA | 1P, 2S | T | 8 | 0 | 6 | £1,719 | Dell Computer Corp | (01344) 720203 |
| Elonex PC-433 | 33 | 1.44, 85 | | 64k | 4 (32) | 14" SVGA | 1P, 2S | S D | 3/5 | 0/1 | 1/2 | £1,275 | Elonex PLC | (0181) 452 4444 |
| Escom 486DX33 | 33 | 1.44, 250 | | 64k | 4 (32) | 14" SVGA | 1P, 2S | T | 4 | 1 | 2 | £1,360 | Escom | (01800) 665500 |
| Haval PC433 | 33 | 1.44, 129 | | | 4 (32) | 14" SVGA | 1P, 2S | S D | 4/6 | 0/1 | 3 | £1,210 | Paragon Technology | (0121) 326 6363 |
| Haval PC450L | 50 | 1.44, 129 | | | 4 (32) | 14" SVGA | 1P, 2S | S D | 4/6 | 0/1 | 3 | £1,279 | Paragon Technology | (0121) 326 6363 |
| Haval PC450E | 50 | 1.44, 210 | 1Mb | 1Mb | 8 (32) | 14" SVGA | 1P, 2S | T | 8 | 2 | 4 | £2,113 | Paragon Technology | (0121) 326 6363 |
| ICL D4/33D | 33 | 1.44, 85 | | | 4 (32) | 14" SVGA | 1P, 2S | D | 4 | 1 | 1 | £1,655 | Technology PLC | (01925) 830404 |
| Kamco CAD | 50 | 1.44, 245 | VL | 256k | 8 (32) | 17" FST XGA | 1P, 2S | D | 6 | 0 | 1 | £2,420 | Kamco | (01895) 271919 |
| Kamco Classic | 33 | 1.44, 170 | | 256k | 4 (32) | 14" SVGA | 1P, 2S | D | 3 | 0 | 1 | £1,249 | Kamco | (01895) 271919 |
| KmcoClassicWin | 33 | 1.44, 170 | VL | 256k | 4 (32) | 15" FST XGA | 1P, 2S | D | 6 | 0 | 1 | £1,595 | Kamco | (01895) 271919 |
| Mesh M486BL | 33 | 1.44, 120 | | | 4 (32) | 14" SVGA | 1P, 2S | D | 5 | 0 | 2 | £1,140 | Mesh | (0181) 452 1111 |
| Mesh M486CL | 50 | 1.44, 120 | | | 4 (32) | 14" SVGA | 1P, 2S | D M | 5 | 1 | 2 | £1,194 | Mesh | (0181) 452 1111 |
| MT 8090-33L | 33 | 1.44, 0 | | 64k | 4 (64) | 14" SVGA | 1P, 2S | D | 5 | 3 | 3 | £1,605 | Memorex Telex | (0734) 441544 |
| " | " | " | | 256k | 8 (64) | 14" SVGA | 1P, 2S | D | 5 | 3 | 3 | £2,655 | Memorex Telex | (0734) 441544 |
| Oasis DX50 | 50 | 1.44, 107 | | 256k | 4 (64) | 14" SVGA | 1P, 2S | S D M T | 4 | 0/1 | 0/3 | £1,299 | Oasis Computers | (01458) 835061 |
| Patriot 486 VL | 50 | 1.44, 125 | 1Mb | 256k | 4 (32) | 14" SVGA | 1P, 2S | D T | 4 | 0 | 3/4 | £1,629 | Austin Computers | (01234) 841172 |
| Perfecta 33 | 33 | 1.44, 105 | | 64k | 4 (32) | 14" SVGA | 1P, 2S | D M | 2/5 | 0 | 1/2 | £1,275 | Watford Electrnics | (01582) 487777 |
| Powerplex Vesa | 33 | 1.44, 120 | 64k | 256k | 4 (32) | 14" SVGA | 1P, 2S | D M T | 4 | 1 | 2 | £1,349 | Multiplex Cmptrrs | (01711) 498 5252 |
| PS 486/50 | 50 | 1.44, 210 | | 64k | 4 (32) | 14" SVGA | 1P, 2S | S D M T | 3/6 | 1/2 | 2/3 | £1,179 | Power Systems | (01452) 831357 |
| SC 486 DX | 33 | 1.44, 105 | 512k | 128k | 4 (32) | 14" SVGA | 1P, 2S | S | 2 | 0 | 0 | £1,199 | SIR PLC | (01635) 580633 |
| Stealth DX Pro | 33 | 1.44, 120 | | 256k | 4 (32) | 14" SVGA | 1P, 2S | D | 4 | 1 | 1 | £1,149 | Multiplex Cmptrrs | (01711) 498 5252 |
| Technical SL486 | 25 | 1.44, 85 | | | 4 (16) | 14" VGA | 1P, 1S | S | 2 | 0 | 0 | £1,054 | Technology PLC | (01925) 830404 |
| Trigem 486MM | 33 | 1.44, 42 | | | 4 (64) | 14" SVGA | 1P, 2S | D | 4 | 2 | 1 | £1,290 | Trigem | (01753) 810808 |
| Vale Premier | 33 | 1.44, 120 | 512k | 256k | 4 (32) | 15" SVGA | 1P, 2S | D M T | 5 | 0/1 | 1/3 | £1,519 | Evesham Micros | (01386) 765500 |
| Vale Premier Plus | 33 | 1.44, 120 | 2Mb | 256k | 8 (32) | 15" SVGA | 1P, 2S | D M T | 5 | 0/1 | 1/3 | £1,819 | Evesham Micros | (01386) 765500 |
| Vale Prestige | 33 | 1.44, 85 | | 128k | 4 (32) | 14" SVGA | 1P, 2S | D M T | 5 | 0/1 | 1/3 | £1,169 | Evesham Micros | (01386) 765500 |
| Vanilla 486DX | 33 | 1.44, 85 | 32k | 256k | 4 (32) | 14" SVGA | 1P, 2S | S D M T | 1/7 | 0/2 | 0/5 | £1,269 | Vanilla | (01711) 631 5454 |

486 DX2 PCs

| | Processor Speed (MHz) | Floppy/hard drive capacity (MB) | Hard disk cache | Cached RAM | RAM (filled/max) | Monitor | Ports (Parallel/ Serial) | Case type (Desktop, Min Tower, Tower) | Free slots | Free drive bays (3.5") | Free drive bays (5.25") | Price | Supplier | Tel |
|---------------------|--------------------------|---------------------------------------|--------------------|------------|---------------------|----------|--------------------------------|---|------------|---------------------------|----------------------------|--------|--------------------|-----------------|
| Akhter 50L | 50 | 1.44, 105 | | 128k | 4 (32) | 14" SVGA | 1P, 2S | S D M T | 4 | 0/1 | 1/3 | £1,469 | Akhter Computers | (01279) 443521 |
| Akhter 66 L | 66 | 1.44, 105 | | 128k | 4 (32) | 14" SVGA | 1P, 2S | S D M T | 4 | 0/1 | 1/3 | £1,570 | Akhter Computers | (01279) 443521 |
| CI Leo | 66 | 1.44, 80 | | Yes | 4 (32) | 14" SVGA | 1P, 2S | D | 2 | 1 | 2 | £POA | Centerprise | (01256) 463754 |
| Compaq Prolinea | 66 | 1.44, 120 | | | 4 (64) | 14" SVGA | 1P, 2S | S | 4 | 1 | 0 | £2,231 | Compaq | (0181) 332 3000 |
| Compusys VESA | 66 | 1.44, 85 | | 256k | 4 (64) | 14" SVGA | 1P, 2S | D | 4 | 0 | 1 | £1,799 | Compusys | (01296) 395531 |
| Dan for Windows | 66 | 1.44, 210 | | 256k | 8 (64) | 14" XGA | 1P, 2S | D M T | 2/5 | 0/1 | 1/3 | £1,758 | Dan Technology | (0181) 902 9922 |
| Dantium 66 EISA | 66 | 1.44, 210 | 2.5Mb | | 4 (384) | 14" SVGA | 1P, 2S | D | 6 | 0 | 1 | £2,188 | Dan Technology | (0181) 902 9922 |
| Dell System450M | 50 | 1.44, 210 | | | 4 (64) | 14" SVGA | 1P, 2S | S D | 3/6 | 0 | 2/3 | £1,429 | Dell Computer Corp | (01344) 720203 |
| Dell System450T | 50 | 1.44, 210 | | | 8 (64) | 14" SVGA | 1P, 2S | T | 8 | 0 | 6 | £1,819 | Dell Computer Corp | (01344) 720203 |
| Elonex PC-450 | 50 | 1.44, 85 | | 64k | 4 (32) | 14" SVGA | 1P, 2S | S D | 3/5 | 0/1 | 1/2 | £1,595 | Elonex PLC | (0181) 452 4444 |
| ElonexPC466LAN | 66 | | | | 2 (32) | 14" SVGA | 1P, 2S | S | 0 | 1 | 0 | £1,350 | Elonex PLC | (0181) 452 4444 |
| Escom 486 DX2 | 66 | 1.44, 340 | | | 8 (64) | 15" SVGA | 1P, 2S | T | 5 | 0 | 3 | £1,616 | Escom | (01800) 665500 |
| Haval PC462L | 66 | 1.44, 170 | | | 4 (32) | 14" SVGA | 1P, 2S | S D | 4/6 | 0/1 | 3 | £1,430 | Paragon Technology | (0121) 326 6363 |
| Haval PC466E | 66 | 1.44, 210 | 1Mb | | 8 (32) | 14" SVGA | 1P, 2S | T | 8 | 2 | 4 | £2,187 | Paragon Technology | (0121) 326 6363 |
| KamcoK433LB | 50 | 1.44, 170 | VL | 256k | 4 (32) | 14" XGA | 1P, 2S | D | 6 | 0 | 1 | £1,370 | Kamco | (01895) 271919 |
| Mesh M486DI | 66 | 1.44, 120 | | | 4 (32) | 14" SVGA | 1P, 2S | D M T | 5 | 0 | 7 | £1,352 | Mesh | (0181) 452 1111 |
| MT 8092-66L | 66 | 1.44, 0 | | 64k | 4 (64) | 14" SVGA | 1P, 2S | D | 5 | 3 | 3 | £1,805 | Memorex Telex | (01734) 441544 |
| Oasis DX2 | 66 | 1.44, 107 | | 256k | 4 (64) | 14" SVGA | 1P, 2S | S D M T | 4 | 0/1 | 0/3 | £1,399 | Oasis Computers | (01458) 835061 |
| Perfecta 50 | 50 | 1.44, 105 | | 64k | 4 (32) | 14" SVGA | 1P, 2S | D M | 2/5 | 0 | 1/2 | £1,299 | Watford Electrics | (01582) 487777 |
| PwrlpxVesa50C | 50 | 1.44, 120 | 64k | 256k | 4 (32) | 14" SVGA | 1P, 2S | D M T | 4 | 1 | 2 | £1,499 | Multiplex Cmptrs | (0171) 498 5252 |
| PwrlpxVesa66C | 66 | 1.44, 120 | 64k | 256k | 4 (32) | 14" SVGA | 1P, 2S | D M T | 4 | 1 | 2 | £1,549 | Multiplex Cmptrs | (0171) 498 5252 |
| Power IV | 66 | 1.44, 270 | | 512k | 8 (16) | 14" SVGA | 1P, 2S | M | 4 | 1 | 2 | £999 | Bits and PCs | (01344) 776050 |
| Reeves DX2 | 66 | 1.44, 120 | | | 8 (64) | 14" SVGA | 1P, 2S | D M | 4 | 0 | 1 | £1,695 | Reeves | (01604) 671277 |
| SC 486DX2 | 50 | 1.44, 105 | 512k | 256k | 4 (32) | 14" SVGA | 1P, 2S | S | 2 | 0 | 0 | £1,299 | SIR PLC | (01635) 580633 |
| SCB DX2 | 66 | 1.44, 120 | | 128k | 4 (64) | 14" SVGA | 1P, 2S | M | 4 | 1 | 2 | £1,399 | SCB Systems | (0181) 298 1114 |
| Stealth 66 Pro | 66 | 1.44, 120 | | 256k | 4 (32) | 14" SVGA | 1P, 2S | D | 4 | 1 | 1 | £1,349 | Multiplex Cmptrs | (0171) 498 5252 |
| Trigem 486MM | 50 | 1.44, 42 | | | 4 (64) | 14" SVGA | 1P, 2S | D | 4 | 2 | 1 | £1,650 | Trigem | (01753) 810808 |
| Vale Premier | 66 | 1.44, 120 | 512k | 256k | 4 (32) | 15" SVGA | 1P, 2S | D M T | 5 | 0/1 | 1/3 | £1,739 | Evesham Micros | (01386) 765500 |
| Vale Premier Plus | 66 | 1.44, 120 | 2Mb | 256k | 8 (32) | 15" SVGA | 1P, 2S | D M T | 5 | 0/1 | 1/3 | £2,037 | Evesham Micros | (01386) 765500 |
| Vanilla 486DX | 66 | 1.44, 85 | 32k | 256k | 4 (32) | 14" SVGA | 1P, 2S | D | 1/7 | 0/2 | 0/5 | £1,649 | Vanilla | (0171) 631 5454 |
| Complete System 486 | 66 | 1.44, 420 | | 256k | 4 (16) | 14" SVGA | 1P, 2S | M | | | | £849 | Bits and PCs | (01344) 776050 |
| Complete System 486 | 100 | 1.44, 420 | | 256k | 4 (16) | 14" SVGA | 1P, 2S | M | | | | £930 | Bits and PCs | (01344) 776050 |

Pentium PCs

| | Processor Speed (MHz) | Floppy/hard drive capacity (Mb) | Cached RAM | RAM (filled/max) | Monitor | Ports (Parallel/ Serial) | Free slots | Free drive bays (3.5") | Free drive bays (5.25") | Price | Supplier | Tel |
|-------------------------|--------------------------|---------------------------------------|------------|---------------------|-----------|--------------------------------|------------|---------------------------|----------------------------|--------|---------------------|-----------------|
| P90 P/CDT | 90 | 1.44, 540 | 256k | 8 (128) | 15" MPRII | 1P, 2S | 2/5 | 1 | 1 | £1,699 | MJN | (01282) 777555 |
| P100P/CDT | 100 | 1.44, 540 | 256k | 16 (128) | 15" MPRII | 1P, 2S | 3/4 | 1 | 1 | £2,299 | MJN | (01282) 777555 |
| LC586DX-90PCI | 90 | 1.44, 260 | 256K | 8 (128) | Various | 1P, 2S | 2 | 3 | 2 | | Akhter | (01279) 443521 |
| LC586DX-100PCI | 100 | 1.44, 260 | 256K | 8 (128) | Various | 1P, 2S | 2 | 3 | 2 | | Akhter | (01279) 443521 |
| Alpha P/90M PCI | 90 | 1.44, 520 | 256K | 4 (128) | 15" NI LR | 1P, 2S | 4 | 3 | 2 | £1,565 | Atomstyle | (0181) 801 1838 |
| Alpha P/66M | 66 | 1.44, 530 | 256K | 4 (128) | 15" NI LR | 1P, 2S | 8 | 3 | 2 | £1,280 | Atomstyle | (0181) 801 1838 |
| Alpha P/90 PCI | 90 | 1.44, 520 | 256K | 4 (128) | 14" NI LR | 1P, 2S | 4 | 3 | 2 | £1,250 | Atomstyle | (0181) 801 1838 |
| Alpha P/66 | 66 | 1.44, 520 | 256K | 4 (128) | 14" NI LR | 1P, 2S | 8 | 3 | 2 | £1,050 | Atomstyle | (0181) 801 1838 |
| Panther P60 | 60 | 1.44, 420 | 256K | 8 (128) | 14" SVGA | 1P, 2S | | | | £1,249 | Carrera | (0171) 830 0486 |
| Panther P75 | 75 | 1.44, 420 | 256K | 8 (128) | 14" SVGA | 1P, 2S | | | | £1,299 | Carrera | (0171) 830 0486 |
| Panther P90 | 90 | 1.44, 420 | 256K | 8 (128) | 14" SVGA | 1P, 2S | | | | £1,459 | Carrera | (0171) 830 0486 |
| Panther P100 | 100 | 1.44, 420 | 256K | 8 (128) | 14" SVGA | 1P, 2S | | | | £1,599 | Carrera | (0171) 830 0486 |
| Prolinea 4/100 1 | 100 | 1.44, 0 | 256K | 8 | Various | 1P, 2S | | | | £1,249 | Compaq | (0181) 332 3000 |
| Prolinea 4/100 200 | 100 | 1.44, 200 | 256K | 8 | Various | 1P, 2S | | | | £1,429 | Compaq | (0181) 332 3000 |
| Prolinea 4/100 340 | 100 | 1.44, 340 | 256K | 8 | Various | 1P, 2S | | | | £1,519 | Compaq | (0181) 332 3000 |
| Prolinea 4/100 525 | 100 | 1.44, 525 | 256K | 8 | Various | 1P, 2S | | | | £1,589 | Compaq | (0181) 332 3000 |
| Pentium P60 | 60 | 1.44, 540 | 256K | 8 | 14" SVGA | 1P, 2S | | | | £1,045 | Computronics Ltd | (0181) 885 2820 |
| Pentium P66 | 66 | 1.44, 540 | 256K | 8 | 14" SVGA | 1P, 2S | | | | £1,069 | Computronics Ltd | (0181) 885 2820 |
| Pentium P90 | 90 | 1.44, 540 | 256K | 8 | 14" SVGA | 1P, 2S | | | | £1,295 | Computronics Ltd | (0181) 885 2820 |
| PC-590M/I | 90 | 1.44, 0 | 256K | 4 (128) | 14" SVGA | 1P, 2S | 3 | 1 | 0 | £1,215 | Elonex | (0181) 452 4444 |
| PC-590M/I | 90 | 1.44, 270 | 256K | 4 (128) | 14" SVGA | 1P, 2S | 3 | 1 | 0 | £1,295 | Elonex | (0181) 452 4444 |
| PC-590M/I | 90 | 1.44, 420 | 256K | 4 (128) | 14" SVGA | 1P, 2S | 3 | 1 | 0 | £1,325 | Elonex | (0181) 452 4444 |
| PC-590M/I | 90 | 1.44, 540 | 256K | 4 (128) | 14" SVGA | 1P, 2S | 3 | 1 | 0 | £1,355 | Elonex | (0181) 452 4444 |
| PC-590M/I | 90 | 1.44, 850 | 256K | 4 (128) | 14" SVGA | 1P, 2S | 3 | 1 | 0 | £1,440 | Elonex | (0181) 452 4444 |
| PC-590R/I | 90 | 1.44, 0 | 256K | 4 (128) | 14" SVGA | 1P, 2S | 3 | 1 | 0 | £1,255 | Elonex | (0181) 452 4444 |
| PC-590R/I | 90 | 1.44, 270 | 256K | 4 (128) | 14" SVGA | 1P, 2S | 3 | 1 | 0 | £1,335 | Elonex | (0181) 452 4444 |
| PC-590R/I | 90 | 1.44, 420 | 256K | 4 (128) | 14" SVGA | 1P, 2S | 3 | 1 | 0 | £1,365 | Elonex | (0181) 452 4444 |
| PC-590R/I | 90 | 1.44, 540 | 256K | 4 (128) | 14" SVGA | 1P, 2S | 3 | 1 | 0 | £1,395 | Elonex | (0181) 452 4444 |
| PC-590R/I | 90 | 1.44, 850 | 256K | 4 (128) | 14" SVGA | 1P, 2S | 3 | 1 | 0 | £1,480 | Elonex | (0181) 452 4444 |
| PC-5100R/I | 100 | 1.44, 0 | 256K | 4 (128) | 14" SVGA | 1P, 2S | 3 | 1 | 0 | £1,635 | Elonex | (0181) 452 4444 |
| PC-5100R/I | 100 | 1.44, 270 | 256K | 4 (128) | 14" SVGA | 1P, 2S | 3 | 1 | 0 | £1,715 | Elonex | (0181) 452 4444 |
| PC-5100R/I | 100 | 1.44, 420 | 256K | 4 (128) | 14" SVGA | 1P, 2S | 3 | 1 | 0 | £1,745 | Elonex | (0181) 452 4444 |
| PC-5100R/I | 100 | 1.44, 540 | 256K | 4 (128) | 14" SVGA | 1P, 2S | 3 | 1 | 0 | £1,775 | Elonex | (0181) 452 4444 |
| PC-5100R/I | 100 | 1.44, 850 | 256K | 4 (128) | 14" SVGA | 1P, 2S | 3 | 1 | 0 | £1,860 | Elonex | (0181) 452 4444 |
| Minstrel P90PCI | 90 | 1.44, 420 | 256K | 8 (768) | 14" SVGA | 1P, 2S | 3/2 | 2/3 | 2 | £1,692 | HM Systems plc | (0181) 209 0911 |
| ValueMagic P60 PCI | 60 | 1.44, 850 | 256K | 8 (128) | 14" SVGA | 1P, 2S | 3/5 | 1 | 0 | £1,470 | IPC | (01282) 618999 |
| KT PNTM 90/100 PCI | 90 | 1.44, 540 | 256K | 8 (128) | 14" SVGA | 1P, 2S | 4/4 | 2 | 2 | £1,245 | KT Computers | (0181) 961 8897 |
| KT PNTM 90/100-X2 | 90x2 | 1.44, 540 | 256K | 8 (128) | 14" SVGA | 1P, 2S | 4/4 | 2 | 2 | £1,995 | KT Computers | (0181) 961 8897 |
| Celeria LP 60 | 60 | 1.44, 210 | 256K | 8 (136) | various | 1P, 2S | 3 | 1 | 2 | | Memorex Telex | (01734) 4411544 |
| Celeria P66 | 66 | 1.4, 270 | 256K | 8 (128) | various | 1P, 2S | 3 | 1/3 | 3 | | Memorex Telex | (01734) 4411544 |
| Celeria P90 | 90 | 1.4, 200 | 256K | 8 (128) | various | 1P, 2S | 7 | 1/3 | 3 | | Memorex Telex | (01734) 4411544 |
| Haval Pentium 566P | 66 | 1.44, 540 | 256K | 8 | 14" SVGA | 1P, 2S | 5/3 | 3 | 2 | £1,305 | Paragon Technology | (0121) 326 6363 |
| Haval Pentium 566P | 66 | 1.44, 1Gb | 256K | 8 | 14" SVGA | 1P, 2S | 5/3 | 3 | 2 | £1,448 | Paragon Technology | (0121) 326 6363 |
| Haval Pentium 566P | 66 | 1.44, 2Gb | 256K | 8 | 14" SVGA | 1P, 2S | 5/3 | 3 | 2 | £2,154 | Paragon Technology | (0121) 326 6363 |
| Haval Pentium 566P | 66 | 1.44, 4Gb | 256K | 8 | 14" SVGA | 1P, 2S | 5/3 | 3 | 2 | £3,060 | Paragon Technology | (0121) 326 6363 |
| Haval Pentium 590P | 90 | 1.44, 540 | 256K | 8 | 14" SVGA | 1P, 2S | 5/3 | 3 | 2 | £1,667 | Paragon Technology | (0121) 326 6363 |
| Haval Pentium 590P | 90 | 1.44, 1Gb | 256K | 8 | 14" SVGA | 1P, 2S | 5/3 | 3 | 2 | £1,710 | Paragon Technology | (0121) 326 6363 |
| Haval Pentium 590P | 90 | 1.44, 2Gb | 256K | 8 | 14" SVGA | 1P, 2S | 5/3 | 3 | 2 | £2,416 | Paragon Technology | (0121) 326 6363 |
| Haval Pentium 590P | 90 | 1.44, 4Gb | 256K | 8 | 14" SVGA | 1P, 2S | 5/3 | 3 | 2 | £3,332 | Paragon Technology | (0121) 326 6363 |
| TG Pentium90-PCP395 | 90 | 1.44, 420 | 256K | 16 | 14" XGA | 1P, 2S | | | | £1,999 | Trigem | (01753) 810808 |
| Perfecta P60 | 60 | 1.44, | 256K | 8 (192) | 15" MPRII | 1P, 2S | | | | £1,349 | Watford Electronics | (01582) 487777 |
| Perfecta P66 | 66 | 1.44, | 256K | 8 (192) | 15" MPRII | 1P, 2S | | | | £1,439 | Watford Electronics | (01582) 487777 |
| Perfecta P90 | 90 | 1.44, 528 | 256K | 8 (128) | 15" MPRII | 1P, 2S | | | | £1,699 | Watford Electronics | (01582) 487777 |
| Complete System Pentium | 90 | 1.44, 540 | 256 | 8 | 15" SVGA | 1P, 2S | | | | £1,590 | Bits & PCs | (01344) 776050 |

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|---------------------|------------------------------------|-----------|--------------------|----------------------------------|------------------|---|---|--------------------|-------------|-------------------------|--------|-------------------|-----------------|
| AJP 6500DX | Note | 486DX | 25 | 1.44,120 | 4 (16) | L-C | 1P 1S 1PCM | 220x280x45 | 3.2 | 2 | £1,995 | AJP | (0181) 452 9090 |
| AJP 6500DX | Note | 486DX2 | 25 | 1.44,120 | 4 (16) | AM-C | 1P 1S 1PCM | 220x280x45 | 3.2 | 2 | £2,995 | AJP | (0181) 452 9090 |
| Elonex NB-425X | Note | 486SX | 25 | 1.44,80 | 4 (32) | L-M | 1P 1S 1PCM | 285x216x44 | 2.5 | 18 | £1,445 | Elonex PLC | (0181) 452 4444 |
| Elonex NB-450 | Note | 486DX2 | 50 | 1.44,80 | 4 (32) | L-M | 1P 1S 1PCM | 285x216x44 | 2.5 | 18 | £1,910 | Elonex PLC | (0181) 452 4444 |
| Elonex NB-466 | Note | 486DX2 | 66 | 1.44,80 | 4 (32) | L-M | 1P 1S 1PCM | 285x216x44 | 2.5 | 18 | £2,010 | Elonex PLC | (0181) 452 4444 |
| Freedom 486 | Note | 486SX | 20 | 1.44,80 | 2 (8) | L-M | 1P 1S | 216x280x45 | 2.4 | 2.2 | £949 | Dataplex | (01753) 535557 |
| Grid 4025N | Note | 486SL | 25 | 1.44,120 | 4 (32) | L-M | 1P 2S 2PCM | 292x215x47 | 2.7 | 5 | £2,179 | Tandy Grid | (0181) 897 6565 |
| MinstrIXPDXCol | Note | 486DX | 33 | 1.44,80 | 4 (20) | AM-C | 1P 1S 1PCM | 213x297x48 | 3 | 3 | £2,675 | HM Systems PLC | (0181) 209 0911 |
| Minstrel XP DX2 | Note | 486DX2 | 66 | 1.44,80 | 4 (20) | L-M | 1P 1S | 213x297x48 | 3 | 3 | £1,550 | HM Systems PLC | (0181) 209 0911 |
| Minstrel XP SX | Note | 386SX | 25 | 1.44,80 | 2 (8) | L-M | 1P 1S 1PCM | 213x297x48 | 3 | 3 | £850 | HM Systems PLC | (0181) 209 0911 |
| Mitac 3020F | Note | 386SLC | 25 | 1.44,80 | 2 (10) | L-C | 1P 1S | 280x220x45 | 2.5 | 4 | £899 | Mitac | (01952) 670370 |
| Mitac 4028G | Note | 486SLC | 25 | 1.44,80 | 2 (18) | L-C | 1P 1S | 280x220x45 | 2.5 | 4 | £999 | Mitac | (01952) 670370 |
| TA Walkstation | Note | 386SX | 20 | 1.44,40 | 2 (8) | L-M | 1P 1S | 279x210x52.5 | 3 | | £619 | Evesham Micros | (01386) 765500 |
| Thinkpad 700 | Note | 486SLC | 25 | 1.44,80 | 4 (16) | L-M | 1P 1S | 297x210x48 | 2.9 | 3.8 | £2,045 | IBM UK | (01256) 841848 |
| Toshiba T1850 | Note | 386SX | 25 | 1.44,80 | 4 (12) | L-M | 1P 2S | 300x214x57 | 3.1 | 5 | £1,375 | Toshiba | (01932) 852167 |
| Toshiba T1850C | Note | 386SX | 25 | 1.44,80 | 4 (12) | L-C | 1P 2S | 300x214x57 | 3.3 | 3.5 | £1,750 | Toshiba | (01932) 852167 |
| Tosh T4400C SX | Note | 486SX | 25 | 1.44,80 | 2 (18) | AM-C | 1P 2S 1PCM | 297x210x59 | 3.65 | 3 | £3,595 | Toshiba | (01932) 852167 |
| Toshiba T4500 | Note | 486SX | 20 | 1.44,80 | 4 (20) | L-M | 1P 2S 1PCM | 297x210x46 | 2.9 | 4.5 | £1,195 | Toshiba | (01932) 852167 |
| Toshiba T4500C | Note | 486SX | 20 | 1.44,80 | 4 (20) | AM-C | 1P 2S 1PCM | 297x210x46 | 3.1 | 3.5 | £1,350 | Toshiba | (01932) 852167 |
| Toshiba T6400C | Laptop | 486DX2 | 50 | 1.44,200 | 4 (36) | AM-C | 1P 2S | 390x267x104 | 5.9 | N/A | £5,299 | Toshiba | (01932) 852167 |
| Victor 400N | Note | 486SLC | 25 | 1.44,80 | 4 (8) | L-M | 1P 2S | 216x279x44 | 2.7 | | £1,419 | Tandy Grid | (0181) 897 6565 |
| Victor 400N/C | Note | 486SLC | 25 | 1.44,80 | 4 (8) | L-M | 1P 2S | 216x279x44 | 2.7 | | £2,179 | Tandy Grid | (0181) 897 6565 |
| AJP 3660 P60 | Note | P60 | 60 | 1.44,245 | 8 (40) | L-C | 1P 1S | 283x262x60 | 3.7 | 2 | £1,899 | AJP | (0181) 452 9090 |
| AJP 3660 P66 | Note | P66 | 66 | 1.44,245 | 8 (40) | L-C | 1P 1S | 283x262x60 | 3.7 | 2 | £1,999 | AJP | (0181) 452 9090 |
| Minstrel XPeco P90 | Note | P90 | 90 | 1.44,340 | 8 (40) | L-C | 2P, 1S | 279x219x51 | 3.09 | .5 | £1,692 | Minstrel | (0181) 209 0911 |
| Minstrel P54C | Note | P90 | 90 | 1.44,420 | 8 (768) | L-C | 1P, 2S | 413x330x180 | | | £1,999 | POA | (0181) 209 0911 |
| Toshiba T1920CS | Note | 486SX | 33 | 1.44,120 | 4 (20) | L-C | 1P, 2S, 1PCM | | 3.2 | | £1,495 | Toshiba | (01932) 852167 |
| Ti Travelmate 4000M | Note | 486DX2 | 50 | 1.44,455 | 4 (20) | L-C | | 216x279x490 | 2.5 | | £1,999 | Texas Instruments | (01932) 780753 |
| S-Platinum TS30MNC | Note | 486SX2 | 50 | 1.44,270 | 4 (20) | L-C | 1P, 1S, 2PCM | | 3 | | £1,529 | Opti | (0181) 507 1818 |
| Thinkpad 360 | Note | 486DX2 | 50 | 1.44,360 | 4 (16) | L-C | 1P, 1S, 2PCM | | 2.75 | 5 | £2,165 | IBM | (01256) 343000 |

Mono Dot-Matrix Printers

| | Number of pins | Paper width | Print speed (characters per second) | NLO speed (cps) | Fonts | Tractor type | Auto paper parking | Cut sheet feeder | Parallel/Serial | Warranty | Price | Supplier | Tel |
|-------------------|----------------|-------------|-------------------------------------|-----------------|-------|--------------|--------------------|------------------|-----------------|----------|--------|--------------------|-----------------|
| BP 5780 | 18 | 16" | 520 | 133 | 2 | Push | * | No | P S | 12m OS | £1,599 | Seikosha | (01753) 685873 |
| BP 7800 | 24 | 16" | 520 | 158 | 10 | Push | * | £245 | P S | 12m OS | £1,699 | Seikosha | (01753) 685873 |
| Brother 1324 | 24 | A4 | 216 | 60 | 7 | Push/Pull | * | £99 | P S | 12m OS | £319 | Brother | (0161) 330 6531 |
| Brother 4318 | 18 | A3 | 800 | 720 | 9 | Push | * | £289 | P S | 12m OS | £1,495 | Brother | (0161) 330 6531 |
| C-420 XAP | 24 | 11" | 216 | 72 | 6 | Push/Pull | * | £40 | P | 12m BB | £349 | Itochu Electronics | (0181) 946 4960 |
| C-5000 | 18 | 15.5" | 540 | 110 | 3 | Push/Pull | * | £250 | P S | 12m BB | £1,495 | Itochu Electronics | (0181) 946 4960 |
| C-515 XBD | 24 | 15.5" | 240 | 80 | 2 | Push | * | £268 | P S | 12m BB | £268 | Itochu Electronics | (0181) 946 4960 |
| Citizen Swift 200 | 24 | A4 | 180 | 60 | 6 | Push/Pull | * | £90 | P | 24m BB | £259 | Citizen | (01753) 584111 |
| Citizen Swift 9X | 9 | A3 | 160 | 40 | 3 | Push/Pull | * | £170 | P | 24m BB | £329 | Citizen | (01753) 584111 |
| DP LX 455 | 33 | 16" | 1,000 | 350 | 6 | Push/Pull | * | | P S | 12m BB | £3,395 | Data Products | (01734) 884777 |
| FX 1170 | 9 | A3 | 342 | 68 | 3 | Push/Pull | * | £79 | P | 12m BB | £539 | Epson | (01442) 61144 |
| Geniprint 25 | 24 | 11" | 240 | 80 | 5 | Push | * | £210 | P S | 12m OS | £489 | Genicom | (01252) 522500 |
| KX-P1123 | 24 | A4 | 192 | 63 | 5 | Push/Pull | * | £69 | P | 12m BB | £240 | Panasonic | (01344) 853915 |
| LQ 100 | 24 | A4 | 200 | 72 | 8 | | Yes | P | P | 12m BB | £245 | Epson | (01442) 61144 |
| LQ 570+ | 24 | A4 | 269 | 90 | 14 | Push/Pull | * | £49 | P | 12m BB | £339 | Epson | (01442) 61144 |
| LT 20 | 24 | A4 | 120 | 50 | 9 | None | No | P | P | 12m BB | £299 | Seikosha | (01753) 685873 |
| LX 100 | 9 | A4 | 240 | 48 | 3 | Push | * | Yes | P | 12m BB | £189 | Epson | (01442) 61144 |
| LX 400 | 9 | A4 | 180 | 30 | 3 | Pull | | £79 | P | 12m BB | £169 | Epson | (01442) 61144 |
| MT 130/24 | 24 | A4 | 300 | 150 | 8 | Push | * | £115 | P | 12m BB | £539 | Mannesman Tally | (01734) 788711 |
| MT 131/24 | 24 | A3 | 300 | 150 | 8 | Push | * | £120 | P | 12m BB | £629 | Mannesman Tally | (01734) 788711 |
| NEC P62 | 24 | A4 | 300 | 150 | 10 | Push/Pull | * | £99 | P S | 12m BB | £459 | NEC | (0181) 993 8111 |
| NEC P72 | 24 | A3 | 300 | 150 | 10 | Push/Pull | * | £115 | P S | 12m BB | £549 | NEC | (0181) 993 8111 |
| Ok! ML380 | 24 | 8" | 240 | 64 | 4 | Push | * | £79 | P | 12m BB | £329 | Ok! Systems | (01753) 819819 |
| SL150 | 24 | 16" | 200 | 67 | 9 | Push | * | £127 | P | 12m BB | £349 | Seikosha | (01753) 685873 |
| 685873SL-92 Plus | 24 | 10" | 200 | 67 | 9 | Push | * | £82 | P | 12m BB | £280 | Seikosha | (01753) 685873 |
| SP 2415 | 9 | 16" | 200 | 50 | 5 | Push | * | £127 | P S | 12m BB | £299 | Seikosha | (01753) 685873 |

Mono Ink-Jet Printers

| | Number of pins | Tractor type | Auto paper parking | Cut sheet feeder | Parallel/Serial | Warranty | Price | Supplier | Tel |
|---------------|----------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------|-----------------|----------|-------|----------|-----------------|
| Breeze 100 | P | 300 | A4 | 83 | 53 | 3 | £349 | Fujitsu | (0181) 573 4444 |
| Breeze 200 | D | 300 | A4 | 360 | 120 | 3 | £500 | Fujitsu | (0181) 573 4444 |
| Canon BJ-10SX | P | 360 | A4 | 110 | 110 | 6 | £299 | Canon UK | (01800) 252223 |
| Canon BJ-200 | D | 360 | A4 | 248 | 173 | 7 | £329 | Canon UK | (01800) 252223 |
| Canon BJ-300 | D | 360 | A3 | 300 | 150 | 3 | £599 | Canon UK | (01800) 252223 |
| Canon BJ-330 | D | 360 | A3 | 300 | 150 | 3 | £699 | Canon UK | (01800) 252223 |
| Jetmate J800 | D | 300 | A4 | 160 | 120 | 5 | £239 | NEC | (0181) 993 8111 |
| Jetmate J800 | D | 300 | A4 | 360 | 120 | 9 | £369 | NEC | (0181) 993 8111 |
| Speedjet 300 | D | 300 | A4 | 300 | 300 | 3 | £359 | Seikosha | (01753) 685873 |
| SQ 1170 | D | 360 | A3 | 660 | 240 | 11 | £899 | Epson | (01442) 61144 |
| SQ 870 | D | 360 | A4 | 660 | 240 | 11 | £659 | Epson | (01442) 61144 |

Controllers

| Type | Price | PC Power % | Supplier | Tel |
|------------------------|---------|------------|----------------------|-----------------|
| Flightstick Pro | £79.99 | 94% | Dimensional Services | (01844) 345406 |
| JT251 Tornado Analogue | £12.99 | 80% | SpectraVideo | (0181) 902 2211 |
| PC-Optix Mega Zoom | £39.99 | 80% | SpectraVideo | (0181) 902 2211 |
| Pro Player | £17.99 | 46% | Selective | (0131) 447 8051 |
| Virtual Pilot Pro | £104.95 | 88% | CH Products | |
| Pro Pedals | £109.95 | 88% | CH Products | |
| Thrustmaster T1 | £179.99 | 95% | Paper Logic | (0171) 636 7099 |

Colour Printers

| Type | Colours | Maximum resolution | Maximum paper size | Draft speed (cps) | High quality speed (cps) | Fonts | Continuous paper | Price | Supplier | Tel |
|--------------------|------------|--------------------|--------------------|-------------------|--------------------------|-------|------------------|--------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Citizen Swift 240C | Dot Matrix | 4 | 24-pin | A4 | 200 | 66 | 9 | £359 | Citizen | (01753) 584111 |
| Citizen Swift 90C | Dot Matrix | 4 | 9-pin | A4 | 180 | 45 | 6 | £219 | Citizen | (01753) 584111 |
| HP Deskjet 550C | Ink-jet | All | 300 | A4 | 240 | 167 | 5 | £459 | Hewlett-Packard | (01344) 369222 |
| JX-735 | Ink-jet | All | 180 | A3 | 120 | 105 | | £1,295 | Sharp | (0161) 205 2333 |
| KX-P2180 | Dot Matrix | 8 | 9-pin | A4 | 192 | 38 | 7 | £270 | Panasonic | (01344) 853915 |
| MT 151/9F | Dot Matrix | 4 | 9-pin | A3 | 300 | 75 | 4 | £589 | Mannesman Tally | (01734) 788711 |
| P72 | Dot Matrix | 8 | 24-pin | A3 | 300 | 150 | 10 | £608 | NEC | (0181) 993 8111 |
| P72 | Dot Matrix | 8 | 24-pin | A3 | 400 | 200 | 10 | £799 | NEC | (0181) 993 8111 |

Laser Printers

| | PC/L Postscript | Speed (pages per minute) | Maximum resolution | RAM (mb/mb max) | Fonts | Maximum paper size | Tray capacity | Number of trays | Toner cartridge life (pages) | Price | Supplier | Tel |
|-------------------|--------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------|--------------------|-------|-----------------------|---------------|--------------------|------------------------------------|--------|-------------------|-----------------|
| Canon LBP-4lite | Other | 4 | 300 | 0.5 (2.5) | 13 | A4 | 70 | 1 | 3,500 | £899 | Canon UK | (01800) 252223 |
| Canon LBP-4plus | Other | 4 | 300 | 1.5 (2.5) | 13 | A4 | 70 | 1 | 3,500 | £1,175 | Canon UK | (01800) 252223 |
| Canon LBP-8 IV | Other | 8 | 600 | 2 (10) | 25 | A4 | 250 | 2 | 2,600 | £1,699 | Canon UK | (01800) 252223 |
| EPL 5000 | PCL4 | 6 | 300 | 0.5 (6.5) | 28 | Legal | 250 | 1 | 6,000 | £745 | Epson | (01442) 61144 |
| EPL5200 | PCL4 | 6 | 300 | 1 (5) | 28 | Legal | 250 | 1 | 6,000 | £929 | Epson | (01442) 61144 |
| HP Laserjet 4L | PCL5 | 4 | 300 | 1 (2) | 26 | A4 | 100 | 1 | 3,000 | £649 | Hewlett-Packard | (01344) 369222 |
| HP Laserjet 4M | PCL5/PS | 8 | 600 | 6 (26) | 45+35 | Legal | 100 | 2 | 6,000 | £1,949 | Hewlett-Packard | (01344) 369222 |
| HP Laserjet 1111P | PCL5 | 4 | 300 | 1 (5) | 22 | Legal | 70 | 1 | 3,500 | £809 | Hewlett-Packard | (01344) 369222 |
| JX-9500 H | Other | 9 | 300 | 0.5 (4.5) | 6 | A4 | 250 | 1 | 3,000 | £895 | Sharp Electronics | (0161) 205 2333 |
| JX-9600 | PCL5 | 8 | 600 | 1 (9) | 27 | A4 | 500 | 2 | 15,000 | £1,159 | Hewlett-Packard | (01344) 369222 |
| Kyocera F-800T | PCL4 | 8 | 300 | 0.5 (4.5) | 79 | A4 | 150 | 1 | 4,000 | £999 | Kyocera | (01734) 311500 |
| Oce 6121 | PCL4 | 8 | 300 | 0.5 (4) | 8 | A4 | 200 | 1 | 3,000 | £940 | Oce Systems | (0181) 502 0038 |
| Oce 6122 | PCL4/PS | 8 | 300 | 1.5 (4.5) | 35 | A4 | 200 | 1 | 3,000 | £1,630 | Oce Systems | (0181) 502 0038 |
| Oce 6123 | PCL4/PS | 8 | 300 | 4.5 (8) | 35 | A4 | 200 | 1 | 3,000 | £1,865 | Oce Systems | (0181) 502 0038 |

Scanners

| Flatbed/Handfed | Colours | Grey scales | Max resolution | Maximum scan area | Software | Price | Supplier | Tel |
|-------------------|---------|-------------|----------------|-------------------|-----------|--------|-------------------|-----------------|
| Col Handy Scanner | H | 262K | 64 | 200 | A4 | £299 | Evesham Micros | (01386) 765500 |
| GT65-PCPL | F | 16.7M | 256 | 1200 | A4 | £875 | Epson | (01442) 61144 |
| HP Scanjet 111P | F | 0 | 256 | 300 | A4 | £795 | Hewlett-Packard | (01344) 369369 |
| JX-100 | H | 262K | 64 | 200 | 3.9"x6.3" | £495 | Sharp Electronics | (0161) 205 2333 |
| JX-320 | F | 16.7M | 256 | 600 | A4 | £1,495 | Sharp Electronics | (0161) 205 2333 |
| Naksha Hand Scan | H | 0 | 0 | 3 | 4" | £40 | Naksha | (01925) 56398 |
| SB-L301 | F | 16 | 300 | Legal | | £1,195 | Pentax | (0181) 864 4422 |
| Scanman 256 | H | 0 | 256 | 400 | 10.5cm | £279 | Logitech | (01344) 891313 |
| Scanman 32-DOS | H | 0 | 32 | 400 | 10.5cm | £109 | Logitech | (01344) 891313 |
| Scanman 32-Win | H | 0 | 32 | 400 | 10.5cm | £159 | Logitech | (01344) 891313 |
| Scanman Colour | H | 16.7M | 256 | 400 | 10.5cm | £449 | Logitech | (01344) 891313 |

Miscellaneous

| Type | Description | Price | Supplier | Tel |
|------------------------------|-------------|-------|--------------------|-----------------|
| Multimedia Discovery Kit | Multimedia | £500 | Westpoint Creative | (01743) 248590 |
| Multimedia Professional Kit | Multimedia | £600 | Westpoint Creative | (01743) 248590 |
| Multimedia Starter Kit | Multimedia | £450 | Westpoint Creative | (01743) 248590 |
| Naksha Mouse | Pointer | £49 | Naksha | (01925) 56398 |
| Paradise Graph Accelerator | Graph Card | £90 | Western Digital | (01372) 360055 |
| Prolmage 1000 | Graph Card | £99 | Opti Technology | (0181) 559 1137 |
| Sonix Sostenuito | Port | £195 | Sonix | (01285) 641651 |
| SoundBlaster | Sound Card | £89 | Westpoint Creative | (01743) 248590 |
| SoundBlaster Pro | Sound Card | £129 | Westpoint Creative | (01743) 248590 |
| Sprinter 2 Graph Accelerator | Graph Card | £195 | Surtech | (01256) 51221 |
| Stealth VRAM Graph Accel | Graph Card | £199 | Evesham Micros | (01385) 765500 |
| Trackman Portable | Pointer | £95 | Logitech | (01344) 891313 |
| Tseng ET4000 Graph Accel | Graph Card | £59 | Novatech | (01705) 684144 |
| Vale Multimedia Upgrade | Multimedia | £399 | Evesham Micros | (01385) 765500 |
| Vale PC Sound Package | Sound | £119 | Evesham Micros | (01385) 765500 |
| Active Speaker Systems | Sound | £129 | Bits & PCs | (01344) 776050 |

Modems

| Speed (bytes per second) | Price | PC Power % | Supplier | Tel |
|---------------------------|-------|------------|------------|-----------------|
| Lasat 288 Unique | £115 | 85% | Lasat | (0181) 741 8011 |
| Andest Road Runner Rocket | £115 | 82% | Andest Ltd | (01494) 429309 |

CD-ROM Drives

| Drive speed | Price | PC Power % | Supplier | Tel |
|-------------------|-------|------------|--------------------|-----------------|
| Panasonic CR563-B | £89 | 86% | Ideal Hardware | (0181) 390 1211 |
| Blueprint ICD | £79 | 80% | Paragon Publishing | (01202) 299900 |
| MMU 2000 | £299 | 90% | Power Computing | (01234) 273000 |
| Sony CDU31A-82 | £119 | 60% | Power Mark | (0181) 951 3355 |
| NEC 4Xi | £299 | 72% | Datrotech plc | (01252) 313155 |
| Toshiba XM3501B | £299 | 85% | Ideal Hardware | (0181) 390 1211 |
| TEAC CD-55A | £269 | 90% | TEAC | (01923) 829630 |

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- ☐ Balitris
- ☐ World Empire
- ☐ Night Raid VGA
- ☐ Rayx
- ☐ Sequest
- ☐ Tilematch VGA
- ☐ Night Raid
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- ☐ Sidetriss VGA
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- ☐ Gamma Wing Vga

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QEMM Quandary

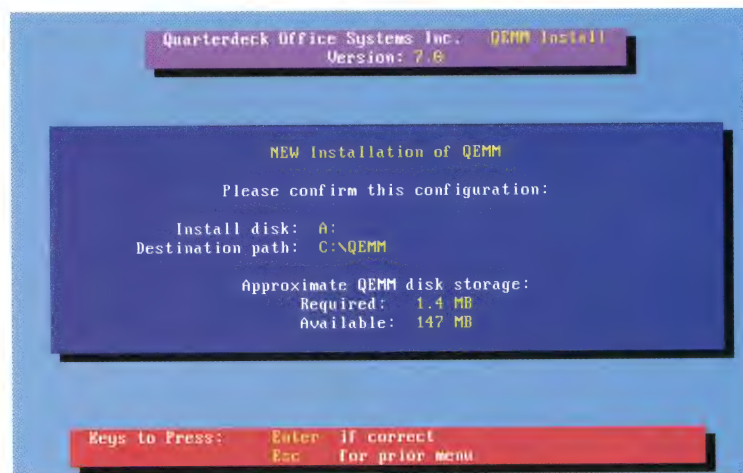
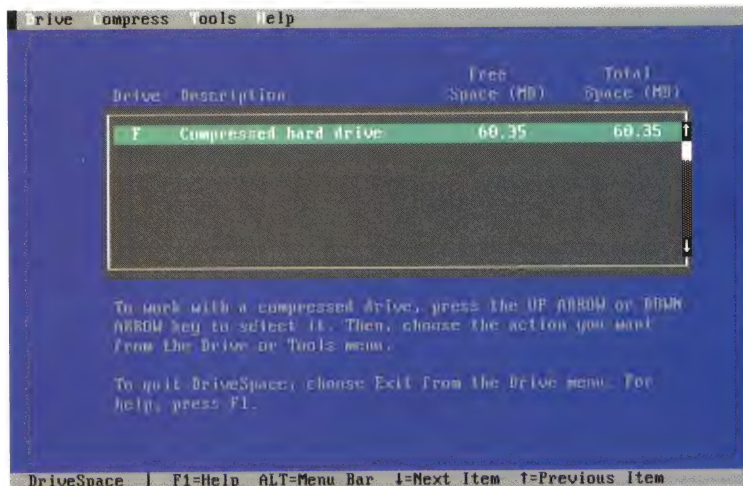
Hi there,
I thought I would write to you to see if you can help me with a few problems I am having with my system. So here goes:

System = 486SX-33, 4Mb RAM, 256 cache.

I've included my config.sys, autoexec.bat and win.ini file for you to look at.

The first problem is most times I load a CD (*Wing Commander 2* on Panasonic dual speed) it doesn't load at all and throws me back to DOS saying "hardware error 015". Most of the other CDs I have usually run okay. Is it a memory error or config error?

My other problem is how to get my fax card (Zoltrix 1414 voice) and Bitfax Lite software to work with a mouse. I know about changing COM ports to stop the conflict but I just



DoubleSpace. QEMM. Two game-wrecking software equivalents of Freddy Krueger. Buy some more RAM, you cheapskates. It's better in the long run.

can't change them. I've tried putting the card on COMs 2 and 4, but it won't work on them. I've tried changing the mouse COM in Windows setup but that doesn't work. I'm at my wit's end as I am trying to use a

WWW browser as well and you cannot use one without a mouse. I've included my COMs setup and IRQ setup, so if you could tell me how to separate my mouse and fax card I would be most grateful. Thanks for

your help.

Fax card is on COM3, IRQ 4.

Mouse is on COM1, IRQ 4.

Nick O'Donnell, Sunderland

Jon says: Hmm... I think the compatibility problems you have spring from using QEMM to optimise memory. The easiest way to get around this is to create a boot disk by typing **FORMAT A: /U /S**, then adding the following configuration files to the floppy.

CONFIG.SYS

```
DEVICE=C:\DOS\HIMEM.SYS
DEVICE=C:\DOS\EMM386.EXE
RAM
DOS=HIGH, UMB
FILES=35
BUFFERS=10, 0
STACKS=9, 256
DEVICEHIGH=C:\DOS\DBLSPACE.SYS /MOVE
DEVICEHIGH=C:\DOS\MOUSE.SYS
DEVICEHIGH=C:\SW32\SWCD.SYS
/1:12 /A:360
DEVICEHIGH=C:\PANA\CDMKE.SYS
/P:300
```

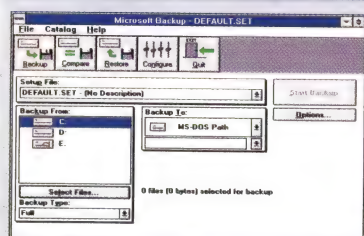
AUTOEXEC.BAT

```
PATH C:\DOS
SET BLASTER=A220 I7 D1 T1
SET TEMP=C:\DOS
SET
COMSPEC=C:\COMMAND.COM
LH C:\PANA\MSCD.EXE
/D:MSCD000
PROMPT $P$G
C:
```

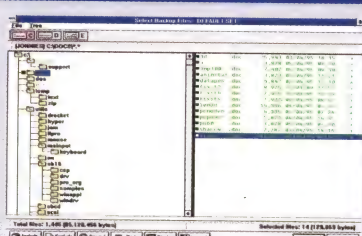
Another problem is that you are using *DoubleSpace*, but removing this will take a long time. *DoubleSpace* interferes with many

BACKING-UP FILES

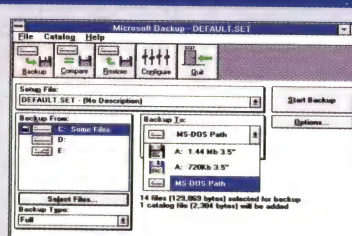
Every now and then, we all get a little paranoid about losing data. The laborious antidote to this condition is to back up your data, and here's how...



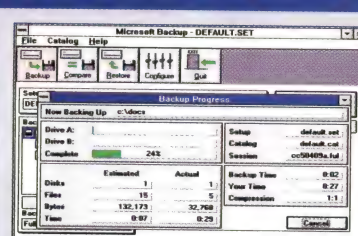
Run **Microsoft Backup** from Windows. The first time you do this you will need to configure it to your system, but the process is mostly automatic from then on.



Select the drive you want to back-up information from. When it is highlighted, click 'Select Files'. Choose the files and directories to include by double-clicking.



Select the disk drive and type of disk to write the back-up to. In the case of floppy disks, this can be either 360K, 720K, 1.44Mb or 2.88Mb, depending on your drive's capabilities.



Click the 'Start Backup' button. **MS Backup** will then ask you not to use the floppy disk drive until the back-up is finished. Now keep feeding disks into the drive until the back-up is complete.

games by changing the software which reads from the hard disk. It also eats memory for breakfast, so get rid of it soon.

Your fax/mouse conflict is another sticky problem, but luckily you have sent me plenty of information to work with. To separate the two you should dig out the Zoltrix installation disks and manuals, then go through the installation process afresh.

The installer should ask you which COM port to assign to the card. When this happens, select COM4 instead of COM3. This way the fax will use IRQ 3 instead of 4, allowing both the mouse and modem to work together. Next, please...

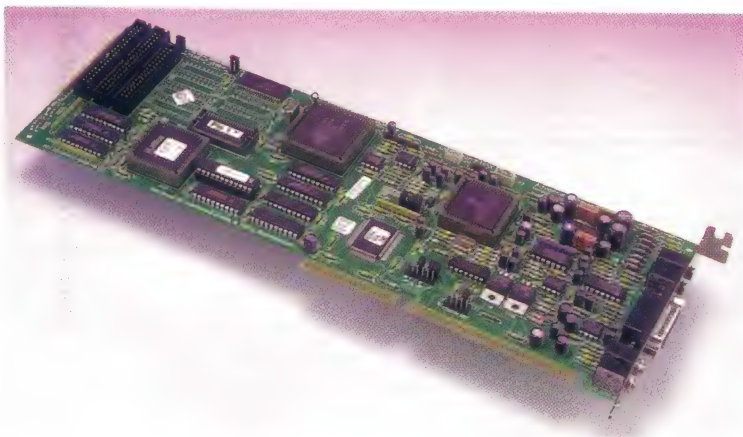
The Case of the Missing MIDI

I need your help, Jon! I have a Gravis Ultrasound Max sound card and I'm having trouble getting MIDI music to work. It's OK under Windows and the demonstration programs all work fine, but most games just refuse to make any sound at all. Barrie Purchase, Liverpool

Jon says: Aha, what you need to do before running a game is to enter the directory containing the Gravis software and type:

LH ULTRAMID

This will start up the Gravis MIDI drivers. You might want to add this to the end of your **AUTOEXEC.BAT** file. They take up around 50K of RAM though, so unless you're totally blasé about memory you'll probably be better off just running the drivers when you need them.



More Memory Mayhem

Dear Jon

I used to own an Amiga and found it hard to believe graphics could get much better until I looked at a PC magazine. I then became a regular reader of PC POWER, even though I had no PC, looking at the reviews and graphics of games.

I have now recently come to acquire a PC of my own and find it great. It is a Packard Bell Multi-Media 486.

Anyway, I am writing to you for advice as my manual is not too clear. I am finding difficulty in loading most games (including cover CDs), receiving the message "you need to free memory." I have followed various instructions from making a boot disk to minor alterations on my config.sys and autoexec.bat files and all have been unsuccessful. I am wary to change these files as I don't want to damage the computer.

I have included a sheet giving details of memory, config.sys and autoexec.bat files and would be

grateful if you could give me some idea of how to solve this problem. Thank you for your help. David Rasheed, Kent

Jon says: Your machine only has 4Mb of RAM, so I'm afraid that not all games will run, but your situation can be improved. I notice from the memory test you sent to me that you were running through the Windows MS-DOS prompt – bad idea, hardly any games will run unless you exit Windows first.

In addition to this, more memory can be gained by changing a few items in your **CONFIG.SYS** and **AUTOEXEC.BAT** files. You say in the letter that you don't want to damage these, so make a back-up by typing:

```
COPY AUTOEXEC.BAT C:\DOS
COPY CONFIG.SYS C:\DOS
```

at the C:\ prompt. This will store a copy of the files in your DOS directory. If you need to return to your old

system, then simply copy them back to their old position by typing:

```
COPY C:\DOS\AUTOEXEC.BAT C:
COPY C:\DOS\CONFIG.SYS C:
```

The revised **CONFIG.SYS** and **AUTOEXEC.BAT** files you need are shown below. I hope this helps.

CONFIG.SYS

```
DEVICE=C:\PLUGPLAY\DRIVERS\
DOS\DWCFGMG.SYS
DEVICE=C:\DOS\HIMEM.SYS
DEVICE=C:\DOS\EMM386.EXE RAM
DOS=HIGH, UMB
FILES=35
BUFFERS=10, 0
STACKS=9, 256
FCBS=4, 0
COUNTRY=044, 850,
C:\DOS\COUNTRY.SYS
DEVICEHIGH=C:\DOS\SETVER. EXE
DEVICEHIGH=C:\WINDOWS\IF-
SHLP.SYS
DEVICEHIGH=C:\SOUND16A\DRI-
VERS\CDMKE.SYS /P:340
/D:CD_DRIVE
```

AUTOEXEC.BAT

```
@ECHO OFF
SET SOUND=C:\SOUND16A
SET GALAXY=A220 I5 D1 K10
P530 T6
SET BLASTER=A220 I5 D1 T4
SET TEMP=C:\DOS
SET PATH=C:\DOS;C:\C\WIN-
DOWS;C\UTILS
LH C:\DOS\MSCDEX.EXE
/D:CD_DRIVE
LH KEYB UK,,C:\DOS\KEY-
BOARD.SYS
LH C:\WINDOWS\MOUSE
PROMPT $P$G
WIN
```

DISK HOTLINE

If you have a problem with this month's coverdisks, call the PC POWER disk hotline now on the number below, open 4-5.30pm weekdays (not weekends, please. This is NOT a general helpline). Pick up the phone now and all your problems of a diskular nature will be at an end! The number to call is:

(01 202) 299900

Budget Games

Some all-time classics pop up amongst the budget releases this month. It's no wonder Keith Pullin is leaping around, grinning and shouting "no tanks, no tanks, I'm free!" as he delves into a dozen or so distinctly tankless offerings.

FLASHBACK

Kixx £16.99 HD

This follow-up to *Another World*, also by Delphine Software, was widely acknowledged as the best platform game of 1993. Veering away from the bouncy, cutesy *Mario* clones that were creeping onto every format at the time, *Flashback* was a voyage into the future with a *Total Recall* inspired plot.

The James Bond type main sprite leaps, swings, ducks and blasts his way around the galaxy on a mission to discover who on Earth (or Mars) he is. The animation is so smooth you could lick it, and the atmosphere is second only to the stunning *Syndicate*.



The hero is back! Unfortunately, he's called Conrad. Poor lad.

With huge scope for exploration, and logical puzzles that complement the action perfectly, this is the only platform game for the person who wants a change from the norm. Incredibly, a new CD-ROM version of this is about to be released at full price. How they expect people to shell out forty quid for some rendered link sequences when this is being flogged off at an unmissable price is beyond me. Take your pick though, I know what I would opt for. **Overall 90% Recommended!**

JORDAN IN FLIGHT

Hit Squad £14.99 HD

This big name license basketball sim is about as enjoyable as having the big man himself stand on your toes. The digitised graphics of all the NBA players look very jerky as they moonwalk around the court. There's absolutely no atmosphere either, no special spinning helicopter dunks, no crowd and the only sound is your squeaking size 14s.

All the normal options are there, including different tournaments and speed settings etc, etc, (yawn, yawn). Plus another scary selection

Syndicate

Hit Squad • £14.99 • HD

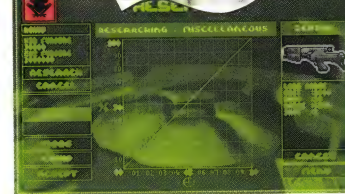
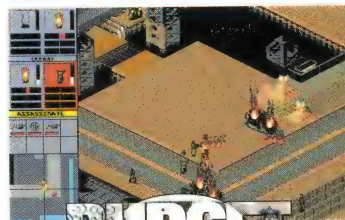
Syndicate epitomised the high standards Bullfrog set themselves when it was originally released to a tidal wave of enthusiasm back in 1993. This game, which until recently was still being converted for every console and computer format going, is without doubt the best strategy/action extravaganza you're ever likely to have the pleasure of playing on the PC.

The 3-D isometric view makes for some tiny characters, but the huge explosions that accompany your group of rampant hired guns as they

spray bullets around the numerous countries of the world, is more than satisfying.

The dark, depressive, foreboding *Blade Runner*esque atmosphere is another reason why *Syndicate* is so unbelievably hard to put down. The massive array of weapons and inventions you coerce the Tefal heads in the science department to produce adds another brilliantly clever angle to the game. Without any hesitation whatsoever I can proclaim this as being one of the best ever PC games.

Overall 91%



of numerals that I can only assume is another pointless barrage of statistics. Oh, and how can I forget the stunning SVGA mode, which of course takes the game from the depths of obscurity to the shallows of mediocrity.

Overall 56%

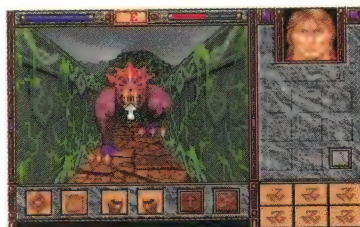
SHADOW CASTER

Hit Squad £14.99 HD

Would you credit it, another one of those games that looks like *Doom*, but is so far astray in terms of quality that the only way it will sell is by releasing it at a budget price and hoping some kind of lobotomised chimp comes along and snaps it up.

The movement is slow and jerky and the world is lifeless and unbelievable. The one character you control has the charisma of a marrow and is so weak at the beginning that a stinging nettle would floor him.

The only plus feature of *Shadow Caster* is the way you can find spells to change into different creatures.



Hampton Court attempts to pep up its main attraction.

Personally, I liked being the wolf even if his claws did look like rabbit feet! Take no notice of this if you see it in the shops, or if you do have to touch it, cast it into the shadows.

Overall 65%

MEGATRAVELLER 2: QUEST FOR THE ANCIENTS

Action Sixteen £14.99 CD

Megatraveller 2 is one of the best overhead strategy games of all time. A galaxy of planets awaits as well as the ability to buy new spacecraft and crew. You start out as an inexperienced pilot looking for some money and a bit of adventure.

All that comes true when some toxic slime is discovered that threat-

ens the existence of your home planet. Creating characters to take on the might of the megacorporations, who seem to have an unnatural interest in this slime, is part of the enjoyment. Unlike other RPGs, the character creation system itself has been made into a small game.

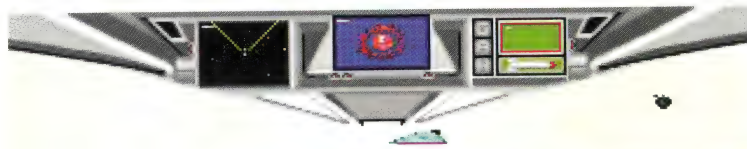
So if space is your thing and you like battles, trading and ancient mysteries, this gigantic, epic quest cannot be overlooked.

Overall 83%

CYBER RACE

Action Sixteen £14.99 CD

Aside from the *Slipstream* type build-up and mixed up story line that borrows plots and quotes from a variety

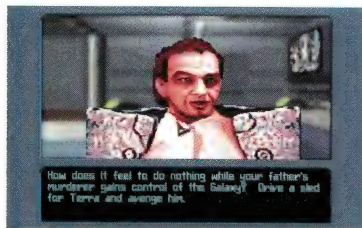


Cyber Race – full of Eastern promise. And blocky red voxels.

BUDGET TOP TEN

| | | |
|---------|-----------------------------|------------------|
| 1 (3) | Desert Strike | Gremlin |
| 2 (-) | Winter Olympics | US Gold |
| 3 (NE) | Space Hulk | Ocean |
| 4 (6) | Star Trek: 25th Anniversary | Interplay |
| 5 (7) | Descent Demo Disk | Interplay |
| 6 (NE) | Star Trek: 25th Anniversary | Interplay |
| 7 (9) | Monkey Island 2 | Kixx XL |
| 8 (NE) | Lottery | VCI Distribution |
| 9 (NE) | Easy To Learn Computing | VCI Distribution |
| 10 (NE) | Windows French | VCI Distribution |

Chart provided by Gallup. NE: new entry. -: no change.



Oy, mate! You forgot to take the coat hanger out of your Top Man jacket!

of sci-fi films like *Star Wars* and *Dune*, *Cyber Race* is completely unremarkable. As you work your way through the massive intro and pile of garbage that calls itself presentation, a feeling of imminent *Doom* rushes over you.

Once the game itself is reached and you first start racing around the horrendously pixelated landscape, your worst fears are indeed confirmed. *Cyber Race* is a racing game in its most basic form. Garish colours, poor graphics and a steering system that's uncontrollable are just some of problems.

If the programmers had done a better job they could have made a good game out of what is a reasonable idea. After all, there aren't a great deal of pseudo sci-fi/off-road racing games around. Oh well, its last drop of life has expired with this budget release – maybe now it can be cast into the pages of forgotten history.

Overall 61%

INTERNATIONAL SPORTS CHALLENGE

Action Sixteen £14.99 CD

What ever happened to the days of frantic joystick waggling and simple events like the good ol' 100 metres sprint? I certainly don't agree with all this show jumping, marathon running and diving, what's going on? That's not a sports challenge – it's a sports



Relive the agony and the ecstasy of the London Marathon. Well, the agony.

bore. Worse still, it makes you look at the training schedule for a marathon runner to get through the protection!

Up to four players can join in the fun and frolics (?!), controlling the players on either joystick or keyboard. But to be honest there aren't enough events and the ones that are featured are just too obscure, not to mention awkward to control.

International Sports Challenge has been left firmly on the starting blocks!

Overall 68%

SUBWAR 2050

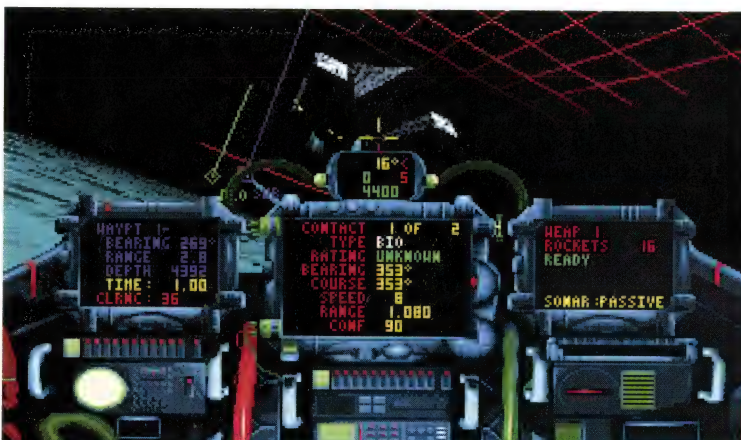
Powerplus £16.99 CD

Ah ha! For once, a submarine game that doesn't have the word 'silent' preceding the name! It makes a change not to see the word U-boat every four lines of text too. In fact, *Subwar 2050* is a stonking futuristic underwater shoot-'em-up with a slight mix of strategy.

Sure, you get all your normal missions, but they're more like the sort of scenarios featured in *Seaquest DSV* – you even get to choose from a variety of subs. The graphics are superb, managing to convey that strange kind of refraction you always get when you're about to drown, and the sound also lends to the eerie atmosphere.

Essentially, what we have here is the normal kind of Microprose attention to detail which rounds off an already polished game.

Overall 78%



Roy Scheider, eh? Bet he's regretting his decision to star in *Seaquest DSV*. "It'll be the next *Star Trek*!" burbled the producers. Sadly, it was the next *Lost in Space*.

DRAGONSHERE

Powerplus £16.99 CD

If you take away the title from this game, you could easily mistake it for one of the *King's Quest* series. Graphically, it looks exactly the same, that's not a criticism mind you – far from it. The good use of colour creates the ideal medieval, magic environment.

All the animation is meticulously done, with small details such as the folding of arms and shaking of heads always prominent. Incredibly though, the downfall of most point 'n' clicks is actually *Dragonsphere's* saving grace. The interface is brilliantly intuitive, with the easy setting giving a few subtle tips to help the beginner.

For an old adventure this is highly playable, another fine budget release, but sadly overshadowed by the classic *Fate of Atlantis*.

Overall 80%

SYNDICATE/UFO: ENEMY UNKNOWN

Telstar Fun & Games £39.99 CD

When a package comes along with two games of this quality tucked inside it, you can do little but drop your jaw in utter disbelief. It's the sort of present that you would even kiss Great Aunt Agatha for. *Syndicate* of course, I've already mentioned – however, included on this CD is the *American Revolt* data disk. The other half of the package, *UFO Enemy Unknown*, is another action packed 3-D isometric adventure, but this time dealing with aliens.

You are in control of X-COM and are responsible for shooting down any UFOs that come into the Earth's atmosphere. That's just the start of the adventure though, as you get together a group of specialist scientists and head off into the wreckage



Greet visitors to our planet with a fusillade of high explosive shells.

to see what you can salvage. Most of the time you won't get anything without a fight. Being more advanced than us, it takes a bit more than a crash landing to kill these green-blooded scum suckers.

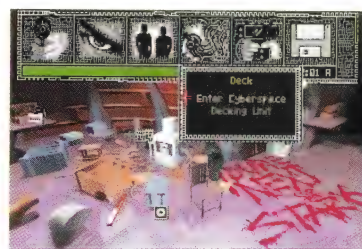
With a wide selection of aliens to keep you occupied, it will be a while before you put this cracker down. Considering *Syndicate's* another one of those games that understates the word addictive, I would consider buying this bundle to be forty pounds well spent.

Overall 90% Recommended!

BLOODNET/MEGARACE

Telstar Fun & Games £34.99 CD

Oh dear. Telstar seem to have done the sensible thing and put their best games in one package. I say, oh dear, because it means that the rest of the range is put somewhat in the shade. However, if the rest of them are as bad as this, it has to be a good thing!



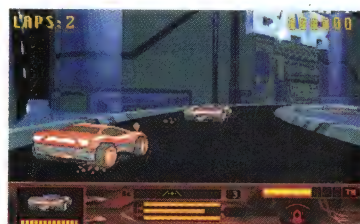
Stark is, apparently, next. Good to see games catering for the visually impaired.

Bloodnet has to be one of the worst point 'n' clicks I've ever come across. If you point on a place for your character to go, he'll bump into everything in his path and finally give up! What the hell do you call that interface? The Artificial Stupidity System, or ASS for short? Whatever it is, this mix of cyberpunk and vampires really doesn't work.

On the flip side, we have probably the most pretentious game ever to hit the PC. *Megarace* is a pure waste of programmers' time. Ninety percent of your time will be spent wading through the link scenes and menu screens – presented by the slimy, ultra-annoying Lance Boyle.

When you get through all that, the game can only be described as a slight gameplay step forward from Atari's prehistoric *Pole Position*. Steer left and right and shoot the other cars, yes, it's so basic your granny would reach for her summer wordsearch special for some brain-taxing relief. Forget you ever even heard of this package.

Overall 62%



Beep beep. Blam blam. Spool spool. Sleep sleep.

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THE JOY OF
STICKS!

We test
all the
latest
joysticks
on page 82



TFX

Buzz the tower in this top notch modern day combat flight sim. Attack helpless aid convoys, bomb nuclear reactors near primary schools – it's all here. A stunner.

93%

INFERNO

This is an in-depth space shoot-'em-up from Ocean, that tests your reflexes to the max as you fight the aliens in space and on the planet's surface. A thrilling adventure.

86%

PREMIER MANAGER 3

Manage your own team and select everything from the shape and size of the stands, to the players' wages and bribes for other teams! A must for footy enthusiasts.

89%

SIMON THE SORCERER

One of the most innovative and funny point 'n' click adventures to emerge in years. Guide Simon through the magical world and rescue someone, no doubt.

94%

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Power Test

Arcade Soccer

Steve Hill goes football crazy (as usual).

The Great British summer: sunshine, cucumber sandwiches, the sound of leather on willow mingling with polite ripples of applause and the soothing chimes of birdsong.

Arsel! What we want is mud, sweat, high-pitched shrieking, diving, fouling and cheating. Yes, it's that time of year when any normal right-thinking person slips into depression as the last embers of the football season fizzle out, and Pimms-drinking ponces in bad trousers emerge from the pavilion. No more 20-man mêlées, barging of referees, or ridiculously contrived backpage

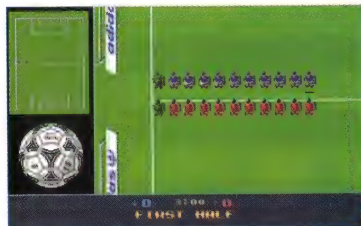
headlines until next August.

Fear not though, because your life-affirming PC POWER is on hand to help you through the barren months as we compare and contrast the best of the available footy sims. So grab a joystick, lock yourself in a darkened room with one of the following and it could be almost like the real thing. Particularly if you charge yourself a pound for a plastic beaker of scorching hot grey liquid and invite some lager-breathed morons to stand behind you shouting witticisms along the lines of "Oi ref, I've had your muvver and sister and both were poor."



Goal!

From Dino Dini, *Goal* allows you to view the action horizontally or vertically, and to have the action zoomed in or out. There is also an automatic option which flits between the two viewpoints, depending upon what's happening on the pitch. This is a less than ideal situation as it can be quite disconcerting to have your players suddenly change size at a crucial moment. Furthermore, there is no happy medium, as when zoomed out, the players appear like scurrying ants, and zoomed in they turn into blocky blobs.



That's him, officer. That bloke there, in the blue shirt.

One original feature of *Goal* is its accurate method of passing. Holding down the fire key when receiving the ball controls it, and releasing it clips it to the feet of the most suitably positioned player. This allows you to string together some fairly intricate moves rather than having to rely on the long ball. Also, when an attacking player is in the six yard box, any shot will automatically be directed towards the goal. Although this takes away some of the feeling of complete control, it does at least give you a reasonable chance of scoring.

Goal includes most top-flight English and Scottish teams as well as a host of European and International sides. There are also plenty of player stats, and options including weather, a variety of pitches, referees, and fully customisable league and cup competitions. Despite being an excellent game on the Amiga, its conversion to the PC has not been 100% successful.



Virgin
Now deleted, though may still be on the shelves in smaller shops
Minimum system: 286-50, 512K RAM, EGA, DOS 2.0 or higher
Supports all major sound cards, joystick

Manchester United Premier League Champions

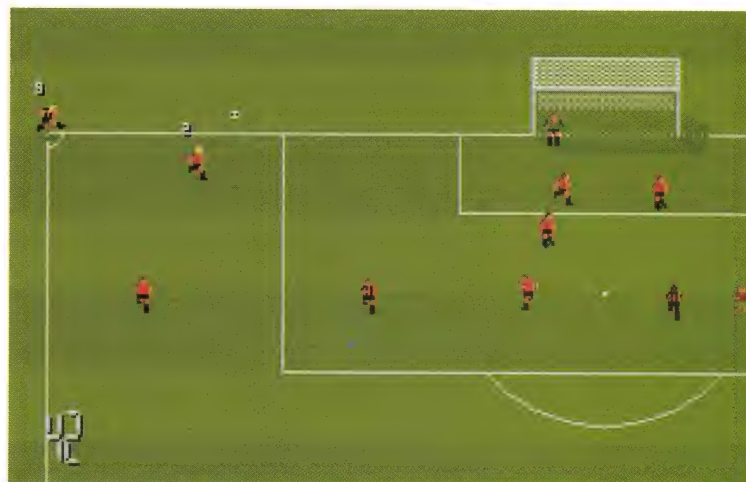
Not any more! Despite being endorsed by the scabby Mancs, this manages to hold its head up reasonably well. Thankfully, you don't have to play as United and can in fact choose any team, from the conference to the premiership, and all come with accurate player names and even skin tones and hair colour. The game is an overhead vertical affair and is essentially a less playable version of *Sensible Soccer*.

Where *Man United* scores highly is in its strategic element, which more resembles a management game than an arcade affair. Before the match kicks off, players can be individually placed on a grid representing their position on the pitch. Furthermore, you can assign particular players to take penalties and both

attacking and defensive free-kicks. Whether this actually makes the slightest bit of difference is debatable but it at least gives you a misguided sense of importance.

There are the usual options of creating your own leagues and so forth as well as proper competitions such as the FA cup. There are also statistics galore, with injuries, disciplinary points and suspensions as well as a choice of three strips (which seems a little low for Manchester United...).

An added extra for armchair fans of the deposed champions is the inclusion of over 460 digitised shots of United in action. So if you really want to, you can drool over Giggsy's tight shorts or marvel at Hughsie's powerful thighs.



You're not champions anymore. Yet another dig at Britain's most hated team.

Krisalis

£34.99

Minimum system: 386, DOS 3.3 or higher, 500K minimum base memory, 4Mb RAM, mouse, VGA

Supports all major sound cards, joystick



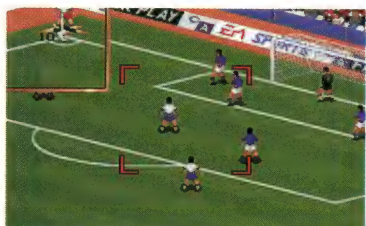
FIFA International Soccer

An exact conversion of the Sega game, this retains the original's nice-looking graphics and style, but unfortunately it also accurately reproduces its limited gameplay. The action takes place from left to right in a 3-D environment with detailed crowd shots, and admittedly looks a lot more realistic than the usual helicopter view.

FIFA manages to whip up a reasonable atmosphere, with commentary provided by doyen of sheepskin jackets, the ubiquitous Tony Gubba. The cumbersome players are hardly blessed with pace or skill though, struggling to turn on a dustbin lid,

let alone the proverbial sixpence. They seem only to be able to run in four directions and their ball skills are limited to either a big kick or a small kick, with no kind of after-touch in evidence. Stringing together any kind of flowing move is rare, and you are often reduced to punting the ball upfield and trying to catch the keeper out with a speculative stub from range.

Furthermore, the options are limited and the players don't even have real names. While *FIFA* may satisfy the average console player, it is just not good enough for the more discerning PC owner.



Ooh it's a corner, ooh it's a corner. Swing one in there and get a head on it.



Score a goal and you are treated to a big purple bouncy smiley thing. Mmm.

Electronic Arts

£39.99

Minimum system: 386, DOS 5.0, 1Mb RAM, EGA graphics card or better.

Supports all major sound cards, joystick



Sensible Soccer

The Amiga classic has been successfully transferred to the PC with its cool look, smooth graphics and playability intact. Despite spawning numerous look-a-like imitations, *Sensi* is still a class act. The graphics are smooth, the action is frantic, and the crowd noises are superb. It is also possible to play entertaining, flowing football, as tapping the fire button releases the

ball to your nearest player, allowing for some stunning team play. A skilful player can make the ball swerve and dip realistically, and it is possible to score some ridiculous goals. *Sensible* makes for compulsive play as it has just the right level of difficulty to keep you interested without getting too frustrated at your blatant inability to score in a brothel with a pocketful of fivers.

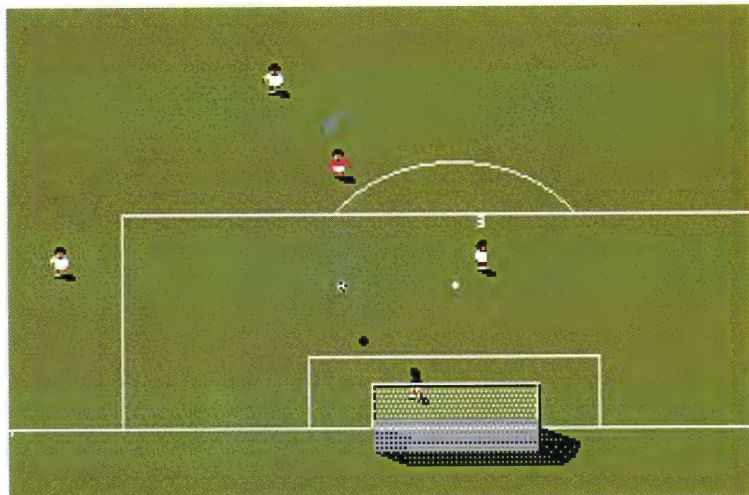
As well as a range of top-flight sides and a comprehensive editor, a unique feature is the inclusion of some bizarre custom teams. These include a Dead XI (with Adolf Hitler adopting a libéro role), and a team of Boring Things, starring Pencil and Table in a dynamic forward line.

This obscure humour, coupled with excellent presentation, make *Sensible* an all-round quality experience.

Renegade
£34.99

Minimum system:
386, DOS 5.0 or higher, 1Mb RAM, EGA video card or higher.

Supports all major soundcards, joystick



The striker must have a foot like a traction engine. If the goalkeeper doesn't make a move soon he could be left with football pie all over his shirt.



All set for the big kick off as the sweaty Mancs take on the sheep-worrying Yorkshire hard men. Or something.

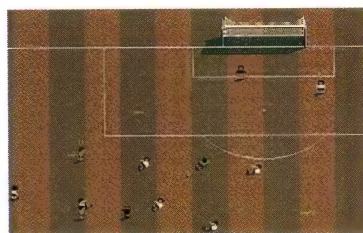
Football Glory

Of all the *Sensible* clones, this is probably the most blatant.

Even the pitch markings and texture of the grass are identical! There is a reasonable choice of top teams and FMV footage of real action follows each goal scored. The game also includes samples of commentary to coincide with goalmouth skirmishes and a nice touch is the skidmarks left on the turf after each sliding tackle.

Football Glory attempts the humorous approach, with occasional distractions such as stray dogs and

streakers running onto the pitch, and speech bubbles appearing as the players barrack the referee. While this is reasonably funny the first time it happens, the novelty soon wears thin. Another irritating factor is the elaborate Lee Sharpe-style celebrations that opponents go through whenever they stick one in your onion bag, with all manner of high-fives, somersaults and synchronised dance routines rubbing in the fact that you've conceded yet another goal. In all, a reasonable game, but not one to keep you up all night.



Kompart UK Ltd
£34.99

Minimum system: 386-33, 4Mb RAM, VGA, mouse, double speed CD-ROM drive
Supports all major sound cards, joystick.
Mouse recommended



Another cropped player is stretchered off following a tasty two-footed lunge. A good game for students of the Vinny Jones school of tackling.



Hitting the net results in a Full Motion Video clip of a totally dissimilar goal.



The ref spots an infringement. Not that South Americans cheat, or anything.

Conclusions



Details

Although it irks me to announce it, *Manchester United* takes the honours in this section. Its selection of all English teams and over 2,500 real players combined with advanced tactical strategy, gives *MUPLC* the edge. *Sensible* runs it close with its varied competitions and particularly its custom teams. There is little to choose between *Goal* and *Football Glory*, each having a reasonably comprehensive set of options, but with nothing spectacular. Finally, *FIFA* is a little limited in its competitions and its made-up player names are a further downside.

| | |
|----------------|-------|
| Sensible | ★★★★★ |
| MUPLC | ★★★★★ |
| Football Glory | ★★★★★ |
| FIFA | ★★★★ |
| Goal | ★★★★ |

Playability

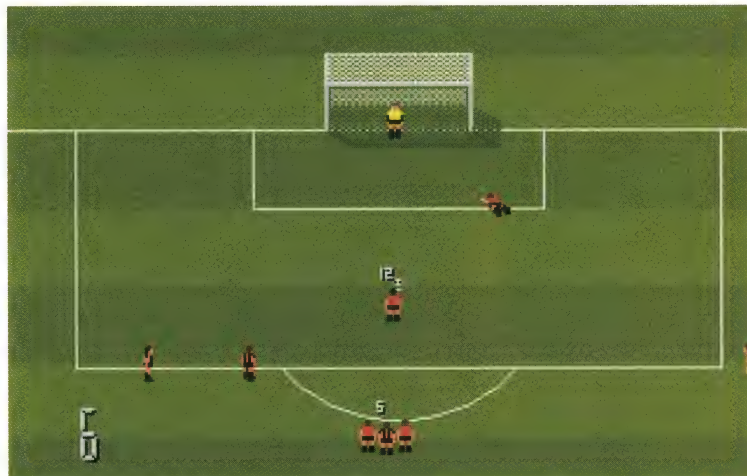
This is the all-important factor that sorts out the wheat from the chaff. After all, no matter how nice a game looks, if it's unplayable, what's the point? The exemplary *Sensi* sweeps the prizes in this section, with its superb ball control and fast action making it extremely addictive. Once you get the hang of its unique control and pass method, *Goal* is also

very playable with some great combinations possible. *Football Glory* and *Man United* are much of a muchness and are basically *Sensible* without the ball control. This again leaves *FIFA* bringing up the rear with its plodding players and limited control.

| | |
|----------------|-------|
| Sensible | ★★★★★ |
| MUPLC | ★★★★★ |
| Football Glory | ★★★★★ |
| FIFA | ★★★★ |
| Goal | ★★★★ |

Graphics

FIFA International Soccer is the only game here to feature 3-D graphics, so I suppose it should come out on top as, despite everything else, it looks good and the crowd and backgrounds are clearly visible. *Sensible* also scores highly with its instantly recognisable stylised players. *Football Glory* looks almost identical



and has a few added features such as speech bubbles. *Man U* is essentially a poor imitation of *Sensi* and is nothing special, visually. Worst of the lot though is *Goal* as, despite having two different view points, neither are satisfactory.

| | |
|----------------|-------|
| Sensible | ★★★★★ |
| MUPLC | ★★★★★ |
| Football Glory | ★★★★★ |
| FIFA | ★★★★ |
| Goal | ★★★★ |

Atmosphere

Again, *Sensible* comes out on top with its excellent sound effects. There is a constant realistic crowd noise, with different chants being loaded in as you play. *Football Glory* is a reasonable effort although its snippets of commentary are a hit and miss affair and soon begin to grate. *FIFA* manages to whip up a reasonable aural frenzy and *Man United's* sounds are adequate at best. Worst of the bunch is *Goal*, with sound reduced to a muffled roar whenever a shot goes in. To be honest, I have experienced a better atmosphere at a Chester City reserve game.

| | |
|----------------|-------|
| Sensible | ★★★★★ |
| MUPLC | ★★★★★ |
| Football Glory | ★★★★★ |
| FIFA | ★★★★ |
| Goal | ★★★★ |

Conclusions

As you may have already guessed, the mighty *Sensible* comes out on top, beating the opposition by some distance. At the end of the day

Trevor, the boys done good. *Sensible Soccer's* cool look, super-smooth graphics and unbeatable playability leave it head and shoulders above the rest, and it is a game you will return to time and time again. It really is a world beater and is the benchmark by which all other football arcade games are judged.

Surprisingly, *Manchester United PLC* takes the runners-up spot, mirroring the efforts of the team this season, in fact. It is a fairly comprehensive representation of the genre, with its in-depth options counting in its favour.

Football Glory, despite its inherent cheesiness, comes in a creditable third. Essentially a *Sensible* clone with a few added extras such as pitch invasions, *Glory* is still a fun game.

The distinctly average *FIFA* misses out on a medal position as for all its impressive looks, it is not particularly playable – but sounds great!

All this leaves the hapless *Goal* floundering at the bottom of the table, with relegation already confirmed as the game is no longer available.

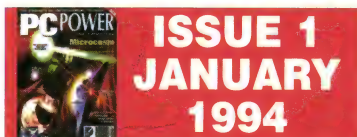
At the end of the day, it gets dark.



Arcade Soccer Games

| | |
|--|------------|
| Sensible Soccer – Champions of Europe! | 95% |
| Manchester United PLC – Premiership! | 72% |
| Football Glory – Endsleigh League! | 69% |
| FIFA International Soccer – 2nd Division! | 66% |
| Goal – Auto Windscreens Shield Preliminaries! | 63% |

Power A-Z



Alien Breed

Team 17: Shoot-'em-up (77%)
Fast moving and enjoyable overhead alien blaster.

Archer Maclean's Pool

Virgin: Sports (90%) PA
The ultimate pool game from a true master.

Indycar Racing

Virgin: Driving (92%) PA
Legendary, thrilling and almost as good as *F1GP*. A stunner, but looks a bit dated now.

Innocent Until Caught

Psygnosis: Adventure (82%)
Half decent point and click Sci-Fi affair.

Jurassic Park

Ocean: Adventure (65%)
Boring and jerky film conversion.

Lilil Divil

Gremlin: Adventure/puzzle (91%) PA
Glorious *Dragon's Lair* type romp which tickled our fancy.

Magic Boy

Empire: Puzzle/platform (79%)
Enjoyable but short-lived puzzle game for kids.

Microcosm

Psygnosis: Shoot-'em-up (76%)
If only the gameplay matched the ground-breaking visuals...

Nick Faldo's Golf

Grandslam: Sports (80%)
One of the best golf games on the PC at the moment.

Rally

Europress Software: Driving (78%)
A serious attempt to convert very difficult subject matter. Not bad.

Shadow Caster

Origin/EA: Adventure (75%)
Great graphics, but not a good *Doom* clone and a poor RPG.

Speed Racer

Accolade: Driving (30%)
Useless pile of cartoon cack.

Striker

Elite: Sports (42%)
Shoddy shadow of the console version. Stick with *FIFA*.

Subwar 2050

MicroProse: Simulation (88%)
The best attempt at a sub game so far and it's actually fun to play too!



Alone in the Dark 2

Infogrames: Adventure (82%)
Tough, but worthy sequel with even better graphics.

Blues Brothers, The

Titus: Platform (63%)
Simple game with little going for it.



Companions of Xanth

Accolade: RPG (80%)
Well drawn RPG with good characterisation and neat plot twists.

Flight Sim Toolkit

Domark: Construction kit (81%)
Remarkably in-depth and sometimes daunting kit which is nonetheless perfect for all serious flight sim fans.

Fury of the Furries

Mindscape: Puzzle (79%)
Fun and mildly amusing game in the *Lemmings* mould. Nice intros.

Goblins 3

Sierra: Puzzle (70%)
Simple and often engrossing puzzle game lacking in the magic of its predecessors.

Hand of Fate: Legend of Kyrandia II

Virgin: Adventure (89%)
One of the better (older) adventures, now replaced by the excellent ptIII.

Hired Guns

Psygnosis: RPG (81%)
Decent enough futuristic *Dungeon Master* replicant.

Jack the Ripper

Mirage: Adventure (32%)
Intriguing plot, but bugger all else. A dog, even if you've read 'The Final Solution'.

Leisure Suit Larry 6

Sierra: Adventure (75%)
Colourful and funny point 'n click adventure, but there are many better out there.

Masters of Orion

MicroProse: Strategy (70%)
A massive and involved space strategy game with lots of possibilities.

Rebel Assault CD

US Gold: Shoot-'em-up (91%) PA
Action-packed *Star Wars* game which looks and plays like a dream.

Ryder Cup Golf

Ocean: Sports (84%)
Well presented and reasonably priced all-round golf game.

Sam and Max

US Gold: Adventure (83%)
Fantastically funny LucasArts adventure like *Day of the Tentacle*. Top.

Sid & Al's Incredible Toons

Sierra: Puzzle (79%)
Crazy puzzle game with zany characters and tons of challenge.

Silverball

Team 17: Simulation (65%)

Poorly designed pinball game which isn't as good as *Dreams* or *Fantasies*.

Spellcasting Party Pak

Accolade: Adventure (80%)
Three saucy text adventure games including naked pics of nubile girls. Great!



Campaign II

Empire: Strategy/war (84%)
One of the most difficult and in-depth battle simulations ever devised. If you like 'em, get it.

Gabriel Knight

Sierra: Adventure (89%)
Atmospheric and brutal New Orleans cop drama that is something special.

Lawnmower Man CD

Sales Curve: Adventure (86%)
A half decent multi game conversion of the two film scripts. Horribly over-rated, though.

Operation Desert Storm

Digital Integration: Sim (81%)
Well programmed and comprehensive tank game.

Pinball Fantasies

21st Century: Sim (80%)
The sequel to *Pinball Dreams*, with four new tables and some corking new effects and whistles.

Police Quest: Open Season

Sierra: Adventure (72%)
A good attempt at an interactive cop movie that is too restricted and contains very little action.

Premier Manager 2

Gremlin: Sports (88%)
The best football management game on the PC.

Reunion

Grandslam: Adventure/strategy (81%)
A very able space *Civilisation*-type game that is fun to play and long lasting.

Quest for Glory IV

Sierra: Adventure (89%)
A captivating graphical adventure that is perfect for RPG novices.



Sam & Max Hit The Road



Unnecessary Roughness

Accolade: Sports (80%)
Apparently the best American football on the PC. I still hate them, though.

Warrior Prince

G&M Software: Adventure (50%)
An awful game that is really showing its age.



Archon Ultra

US Gold: Puzzle (80%)
Well programmed chess-like fantasy war game which improves on Archon.

Cannon Fodder

Virgin: Shoot-'em-up (94%) PA
Brutal, bloody, sadistic and damn good fun. *CF* is one of the best games ever!

Daemonsgate

Gametek: RPG (71%)
Able and complex RPG which goes a little too deep for most people. Serious fans only.

Evasive Action

Mindscape: Flight sim (89%)
Fly anything from bi-planes to spaceships in this excellent flight sim.

Genesia

Mindscape: Adventure (88%)
Enjoyable *Populous*-style game which takes a while to get into, but is worth the wait.

Megarace

Mindscape: Driving (55%)
Handling in this terrible game is woeful and even the great graphics don't make this a silk purse.

Micro Machines

Codemasters: Driving (56%)
Too simplistic and childish for the PC really. A colourful game with limited long term appeal.

Mortal Kombat

Virgin: Beat-'em-up (87%)
Still one of the best one-on-one fighting games on the PC. No blood, though.

NFL Pro League Football

Digital Integration: Sports (64%)
Another sad attempt to convert American football to the PC. Not enough off the pitch management.

Nomad

Gametek: Strategy/adventure (72%)
A space adventure which is eclipsed by Gametek's fabulous *Frontier*. Not that bad, but it does get repetitive.

Rock 'n Roll Decades, The CD

Supervision: Multimedia (80%)
A sound attempt to create a true multimedia conversion of the *Rock 'n Roll Years*. But where's the 60s, 70s and 80s?





Sim City 2000

Maxis: Sim (94%) PA
They've improved on the original with better graphics and even more statistics. One of the best.



Airforce Commander

Impressions: Strategy (52%)
This game centres on the air supremacy aspect of warfare. Good detail, but bad presentation.

Airlines

Interactivision: Strategy/sim (62%)
You are the commander of an entire air-line. Why not try and cause the biggest crash? Too technical.

Award Winners

Empire: Compilation (88%)
Four great games in one box. *Elite* (yeah!), *Sensible Soccer* (Yeah!), *Jimmy White's* (not bad) and *Zool* (Bleuch!). Good value.

Fantastic Dizzy

Codemasters: Platform (81%)
A fun, but too cute platform romp which will appeal to younger players. Adults beware.

Kevin Keegan's Player Manager

Imagineer: Sports (55%)
A lack of management elements and a rubbish control system on the pitch makes this a dud for our Kev.

Sabre Team

Krisalis: Strategy (90%) PA
An involving and violent strategy game based on a team of SAS commandos. Highly playable.

Seawolf

EA: Strategy/sim (83%)
Definitely one of the better sub games, featuring good combat and some neat film clips.

Starlord

MicroProse: Shoot-'em-up (67%)
Good looking, but simple and repetitive space game that holds few surprises.

Star Trek 25th Anniversary

Interplay: Adventure (75%)
Trekki will love the attention to detail but in truth this game is too short and has shabby graphics.

The Elder Scrolls: Arena

US Gold: RPG (86%)
An astounding first RPG from Bethesda with multiple missions and a vast long term challenge.

Who Shot Johnny Rock?

American Laser Games: Shoot-'em-up (59%)
Bad collision detection ruins what could otherwise have been a top notch coin-op conversion.

Wizard!

Psygnosis: RPG (61%)
Another *Doom* perspective RPG which adds nothing new to the genre. Combat is very poor.



Animation Workshop (Hanna Barbera)

Empire: Multimedia (88%)
A fun paint and animation package that allows you to create your own *Scooby Doo* cartoons. Zoinks!

Blue & the Gray, The

Impressions: Strategy/war (65%)
Advanced strategy game about the American Civil War. A bit too complicated to be enjoyable.

Carriers at War II

EA: Strategy/sim (69%)
The depth of research in this navy sim is admirable, pity the game is slow and lacking in excitement.

Delta V

US Gold: Shoot-'em-up (91%) PA
Breath-taking graphics complement a lightning fast blasting game that shines above the rest.

Fleet Defender

MicroProse: Sim (85%)
A solid no-nonsense carrier-based flight sim that is now overshadowed by *US Navy Fighters*.

Hell Cab

Time Warner: Adventure (80%)
A strange time travelling adventure which drops you off in hell and New York. What's the difference?

In Extremis

US Gold: RPG/adventure (85%)
Doom inspired space adventure with tons of atmosphere. *System Shock* is better, though.

Myst

EA: Adventure (91%) PA
A haunting and beautiful SVGA graphic adventure. One of the best on the PC.

Ravenloft

US Gold: RPG (70%)
One for dedicated AD&D fans only. Well presented, but nothing special.

Red Hell

Cyberdreams: Adventure (67%)
Cool name, but a duff game from the producers of the excellent *Dark Seed*. Acting is terrible.

UFO: Enemy Unknown

MicroProse: Adventure/RPG (86%)
You are the head of X-COM and your mission is to uncover and eliminate any alien invaders. Simply an excellent game.

Ultima VIII

EA: RPG (82%)
The master of the genre is back with another stunner. Not the best of the series.

Wolfenstein 3-D

ID Software: Shoot-'em-up (85%)
The prequel to *Doom* and crammed full of gore, Nazis and stupid hats. A good blast, but *Doom* is better.



Aegis: Guardian of the Fleet

Time Warner: Sim (80%)
Competent and remarkably complex navy sim which unfortunately doesn't utilise the CD's vast storage space.

Brutal Football

Millennium: Sports (53%)
Another tosh American football game. Why do they bother?



Corridor 7

Gametek: Shoot-'em-up (70%)
Better graphics than *Doom* but nowhere near the playability.

Detroit

Impressions: Sim (72%)
Highly original simulation about the car business in the USA. Compre-hensive, but soon gets repetitive.

Dragon's Lair CD

Elite: Adventure (70%)
The old classic laser disk game pops up again. Great graphics but an annoying control method.

Empire Soccer '94

Empire: Sports (85%)
Second only to *FIFA* as the best and most accurate football game.

European Champions

Ocean: Sports (69%)
An uninspiring footy game with base graphics and nothing special up its sleeve.

The Horde

US Gold: Adventure (85%)
Quirky seems to be the general consensus of opinion on this one. A good mix of action and adventure.

Pacific Strike

EA: Flight sim (90%) PA
An amazing WW2 sim that has astounding graphics and plays well too. A top buy.

Sam & Max CD

US Gold: Adventure (83%)
A classic point & click adventure now on CD. One of the best and nearing *Day of the Tentacle* territory.

Space Hulk CD

EA: Strategy/adventure (90%)
An amazing example of a claustrophobic maze adventure that really works. Fun for all the family.

Spaceship Warlock CD

UBI Soft: Adventure (67%)
A *Blade Runner* rip-off with some of the worst acting we've ever seen.

Summer/Winter Challenge

Accolade: Sports (72%)
A dire and jerky Olympic sim with minimal playability. The two games on offer show their age badly.



Al Qadim

US Gold: Adventure (84%)
A thoroughly enjoyable and very pretty adventure in a world of magic and mystery. Puzzles are weak, though.

Companions of Xanth CD

Accolade: RPG (82%)
Sad acting and the worst puns we've ever seen, but nonetheless a good solid RPG.

Cool Spot

Virgin: Platform (81%)
Cartoony platform game which is fairly playable, but repetitive. Dave Perry's early work.

D-Day

Impressions: Strategy (65%)
Accurate, but too complex and slow rendition of the events in Normandy.

Little Divil CD

Gremlin: Puzzle/ adventure (79%)
Funny and pretty graphic adventure in the *Dragon's Lair* mould.

Lost Files of Sherlock Holmes CD

EA: Adventure (60%)
Wish they had been...

Overlord

Virgin: Flight sim (80%)
One of the most impressive WW2 games out. Good graphics are complemented by a top notch flight engine.

Pinball Dreams 2

21st Century: Sim (79%)
Four new tables and more pinballing than you can handle. If you hate pinball, this won't convert you however.

Robinson's Requiem

Daze Marketing: RPG (51%)
A visually stunning Sci-Fi adventure, sadly lacking somewhat in the gameplay department.

Simon the Sorcerer CD

Adventuresoft: Adventure (94%) PA
A cutesy style point & click adventure with a good line in humour. Chris Barrie does the voice over.

Theme Park

EA: Sim (89%)
Brilliantly playable and funny theme park builder with a nice rendered intro for the kids.

Wargame Construction Set II: Tanks

US Gold: Strategy (48%)
Incredibly bland and boring tank game with no redeeming features.

World Cup USA '94

US Gold: Sports (88%)
Despite the crap licence, this is a well programmed and slickly presented footy game with style.

Zool 2

Gremlin: Platform (80%)
Colourful and cartoony platform game with limited appeal for serious players. Not bad.



1942 Pacific Air War

MicroProse: Flight sim (94%) PA
Without doubt the best WW2 flight sim around. Great graphics, realistic gamepla, and tons of missions.

Beneath a Steel Sky CD

Virgin: Adventure (88%)
Evocative and atmospheric *Blade Runner*-esque adventure. Great character development and art by Dave Gibbons.

FIFA Soccer

EA: Sports (86%)
A top notch conversion of the console hit. Extraordinarily clear graphics and full voice commentary.

Grandest Fleet, The

Millennium: Strategy (79%)
Bare bones naval strategy game. Two player is good, though.

Harpoon II

Accolade: Sim (70%)
For seasoned navy warfare veterans only. Highly detailed and involved sim that arcade freaks will hate.

Isle of the Dead

Merit Software: Adventure/beat-'em-up (76%)
A very basic looking Friday the 13th horror film with *Doom*-esque action sequences.

Outpost CD

Sierra: Sim (86%)
A highly enjoyable and playable *Populous*-type strategy game in space.

Privateer CD

EA: Shoot-'em-up/strategy (59%)
Dated and pale imitation of *WC3* that doesn't improve now that it's on CD.

Shadow of the Comet CD

Infogrames: Adventure (68%)
Not a bad adaptation of the HP Lovecraft tale, remarkable because you get a free mouse mat.

Soccer Kid

Krisalis: Platform (79%)
Dated and repetitive platformer where you play a kid who uses a football as a weapon.

TIE Fighter

Virgin: Shoot-'em-up (95%) PA
The best blasting game so far on the PC. True to the films, fast, frantic and with amazing 3-D graphics.



Battle Bugs

Sierra: Sim/strategy (85%)
An unusual blend of fighting and planning in the ant world. Worth a look as competition to *Sim Ant*.

Dark Legions

US Gold: RPG/strategy (73%)
Quite fun, but too expensive and simple

mystical strategy game. There are plenty of others.

Desert Strike

Gremlin: Shoot-'em-up (85%)

The game that sold a million is finally on the PC and it ain't half bad. Isometric chopper game.

Heimdall 2

Core: Adventure (82%)

Abandoning the original format, this is a colourful isometric adventure which is fun to play right to the end.

Ishar 3

Daze Marketing: RPG (76%)

A good intro to RPGs, this is the latest in the Ishar series, but it isn't quite as good as *Elder Scrolls*.

King's Quest CD

Sierra: Adventure (85%)

A compilation of the KQ series which is both good value and absorbing.

Manchester United PLC

Krisalis: Sports (80%)

Another attempt to beat *Sensible Soccer*. Poor graphics and sound ruin it.

Pinball Dreams Deluxe CD

21st Century: Sim (70%)

A good buy if you haven't got the original, this features 3-D intros and terrific music.

Planet Soccer

Infogrames: Sports (52%)

A brave attempt to marry good graphics with wild camera angles. It fails on the playability front.

Psychotron CD

Merit Software: Adventure (65%)

Sad attempt at an early interactive movie.

As usual the acting is B-movie and the plot is non-existent.

Superhero League of Hoboken

Accolade: RPG (83%)

The review said "If you're into mutation, you'll love this." Yeeeeeesss! As Jeremy Paxman would say.

Wing Commander Armada

EA: Shoot-'em-up (88%)

A worthy addition to the series, but try WC3 instead.



Brian Lara's Cricket

Audiogenic: Sports (70%)

One of the most famous cricketers of recent times puts his name to an only average sports sim.

Doom II

ID Software: Shoot-'em-up (95%) PA
Budda budda! Ba-Dam! This is the ultimate gore-fest. Superb one player and unbeatable death match.

Dreamweb

Empire: Adventure (80%)

Despite being too restricted and linear, this is nonetheless an impressive and playable game.

Fritz Chess

Playtime: Sim (80%)

Don't even bother with this unless you're a grand master. It beat Kasparov y'know.

Inferno CD

Ocean: Shoot-'em-up (86%)

It looks fab and plays smoothly once you've got the hang of the controls. Nice film sequences too.

Rise of the Robots

Mirage: Beat-'em-up (32%)

I don't care what PC Power gave this originally, it's crap and no-one should buy it.

Return to Ringworld CD

Time Warner: Adventure (68%)

A fair game on the CD, but it could have

been so much better if the game design was improved.

Star Crusader CD

Gametek: Shoot-'em-up (81%)

When you're dealing with space shoot-'em-ups you better be good. This isn't as fun as *Inferno* or *TIE Fighter*.

Ultimate Domain CD

Mindscape: Strategy (88%)

A polished and playable *Populous* clone that captivates and enthralls. That means it's good, by the way.



Aces of the Deep

Sierra: Simulation (80%)

Well rounded and playable WW2 U-boat sim from Dynamix.

Alien Legacy

Sierra: Strategy (68%)

Too structured and not as good as *Outpost*.

Alone in the Dark 2 CD

Infogrames: Adventure (89%)

Controversial but ultimately better sequel to *Alone in the Dark*, this time with welcome maze-skip option!

Bloodnet CD

MicroProse: Adventure (81%)

Vampire terror and plenty of moody stills, but a convoluted plot.

Colonisation

MicroProse: Simulation (90%) PA.

Fabulous sequel to *Civilisation*.

Underrated at the time.

Dark Sun: Wake of the Ravager CD

Mindscape: RPG (85%)

One of the best AD&D games on the market today. Plenty of adventure and dark dungeons to explore.

Ecstatica CD

Psygnosis: Adventure (87%)

Stunning graphics, but slow, jerky and can sometimes be a bit difficult to play. It's still a ground-breaker, though.

Klik & Play

Europress Software: Utility (90%) PA

Write your own games with this excellent Windows game creator. Great fun if you have the time.

Little Big Adventure CD

Electronic Arts: Adventure (95%) PA

Breath taking French isometric adventure which is quite simply the best on the PC today. Get it now!

Lords of the Realm

Impressions: Simulation (84%)

Be lord of the manor with this medieval sheep-fest – sadly no torture peasants option, though.

Magic Carpet CD

Electronic Arts: Shoot-'em-up (92%) PA

Smooth and unbelievably slick carpet blaster that turns convention on its head.

Micro Machines

Codemasters: Driving (61%)

Legendary overhead racing game with terrific two player mode, but boring singularly. Could've been a contender.

Microsoft Space Sim

Microsoft: Simulation (80%)

Technically accurate, but sometimes plodding and laborious. Good missions and spacecraft but for enthusiasts only.

Novastorm CD

Psygnosis: Shoot-'em-up (78%)

Pretty visuals, but a standard action game that wouldn't look out of place on the Mega-CD.

Quarantine CD

Gametek: Shoot-'em-up (86%)

Basically *Doom* in a taxi and none the



worse for that. Action packed and wrapped in gory cyberpunk graphics.

System Shock CD

Electronic Arts: Adventure (94%) PA

I don't agree with the old PC POWER rating, so here's a new one. Classic claustrophobic *Alien*-esque space adventure.

Transport Tycoon

MicroProse: Simulation (90%) PA

Railroad Tycoon is but a memory as this superb sim blows it away. Well worth the money.

US Navy Fighters CD

Electronic Arts: Simulation (96%) PA

The best modern day flight sim around. Hot SVGA graphics, but jerky on anything lower than a Pentium.

Warcraft

Interplay: Strategy (78%)

Bare bones AD&D war game with some in-depth manoeuvres and functional graphics.



All New World of Lemmings

Psygnosis: Strategy (79%)

New and improved with SVGA visuals and new skills, but you can't beat the simplicity of the original.

Armoured Fist

US Gold: Simulation (84%)

Basically just *Commander* on the ground, but the in-game graphics aren't half as nice as those in the intro.

Creature Shock

Virgin: Shoot-'em-up (79%)

A game for late nights, boot it up and get lost in the catacombs with loads of psychotic aliens.

Cyberwar

SCI: Strategy/Shoot-'em-up (65%)

Fancy graphics in the *Lawnmower Man* vein, but not a lot of fun to play.

Dawn Patrol

Empire: Simulation (81%)

Styled like an interactive novel, this game is a realistic portrayal of WWI air battles. SVGA is fabbo, but it is very tough.

Dragon Lore

Mindscape: Adventure (88%)

Fascinating and well scripted adventure game with more lush pics than *Liz Hurley*.

EarthSeige

Sierra: Shoot-'em-up (72%)

Big robots, big guns, not big fun.

Kyrandia III CD

Virgin: Adventure (70%)

A highly visual and taxing game, but *Dino* didn't seem to like it.

Lode Runner

Sierra: Platform/puzzle (86%)

The C64 classic returns for some nifty platform action that just doesn't date. Still a good laugh.

NASCAR Racing

Virgin: Driving (85%)

Almost identical to *Indycar*, NASCAR

looks amazing (esp in SVGA for those that can afford it) but is too hard to play.

Noctropolis CD

Electronic Arts: Adventure (83%)

A full-on gothic vampire tale with shiploads of dusky maidens and plenty of blood-sucking. Our kind of game!

Rally Championship

Flair: Driving (84%)

Powerdrive pretender to the throne with plenty of good graphics and an adequate game engine.

Retribution

Gremlin: Shoot-'em-up (80%)

Nothing out of place here, but a little too simplistic for sustained play.

Under a Killing Moon CD

US Gold: Adventure (90%) PA

Totally interactive Philip Marlow-type adventure with tons of moody settings. Some hate it, most love it.

Universe

Core Design: Adventure (68%)

Not bad looking Sci-Fi sleuth-'em-up with some nice touches, but not enough of them.

Virtuoso CD

Elite: Shoot-'em-up (52%)

Pale and insignificant *Doom* clone which has a rock star as a central character. Weak.

Zork Anthology CD

Activision: RPG (80%)

Four classic text only adventure games from yesteryear.



Aladdin

Virgin: Platform (71%)

Glitzy Disney console-style platformer. Not bad, but not really suited to the PC.

Alien Logic CD

Mindscape: Adventure/RPG (80%)

A good RPG that will appeal to many people, especially those who've grown tired of AD&D games.

Cannon Fodder 2

Virgin: Shoot-'em-up (80%)

Same old blood 'n guts, but this time with even more all-new levels. Not that big an improvement.

Commander Blood CD

Mindscape: Adventure (86%)

An intriguing sequel to the ancient *Captain Blood* (with music by Jean Michel Jarre don't y'know).

Football Pro '95

Sierra: Sports (78%)

Yet another tosh American Football game. Yawn.

Frankenstein

Merit Studios: Platform (45%)

Childish pile of tosh that shouldn't have ever been converted.

Freddy Pharkas CD

Sierra: Adventure (78%)

A fair update of the floppy game which



has an entirely new soundtrack and full speech added.

Hell CD

Gametek: Adventure (92%) PA
Dark and bloody 18 rated adventure that seems quite good.

Journeyman Project Turbo CD

US Gold: Adventure (64%)
CD update of the ageing adventure game from Presto.

King's Quest VII CD

Sierra: Adventure (92%) PA
An interactive fairy tale which is perfect for all ages and talents. Top.

Lion King

Virgin: Platform (84%)
More Disney related japes in this okay-ish conversion of the recent console hit.

Menzoberranzan CD

Mindscape: RPG (86%)
A truly inspirational and evocative adventure game with fab graphics and effects.

On the Ball: World Cup Edition

Daze Marketing: Sports (79%)
Frill-free footy management game.

Panzer General CD

Mindscape: Strategy (83%)
Unusually this is a very easy game to play and perfect for beginners. It's about tanks by the way.

PowerDrive

US Gold: Driving (70%)
A poor attempt to convert rallying to the PC. Terrible controls and too hard.

Project X

Team 17: Shoot-'em-up (80%)
A standard shoot-'em-up with little plot and the same old Amiga looking sprites.

Shadows of Darkness CD

Sierra: Adventure (86%)
The CD version of the adventure game has loads of great new voices from Hollywood.

Sim City 2000 CD

Maxis: Sim (94%) PA
The CD version of this classic has the Great Disasters disk included and is quite simply brilliant.

Voyeur CD

Interplay: Adventure (70%)
Sad attempt at an interactive movie with some saucy bits. Can't wait for the hard core version.

Wing Commander III CD

EA: Shoot-'em-up/adventure (95%) PA
The epic mini-movie is on four CDs and is the WC fan's nirvana. Simply brilliant!



Alone in the Dark 3

Infogrames: Adventure (91%) PA
Best of the *Alone* series to date, with Carnby battling zombie cowboys on a haunted film set.

BreakThru!

MicroProse: Puzzle (80%)
Mr Tetris strikes again, but can't match the addictive immediacy of the original.

Combat Classics 3

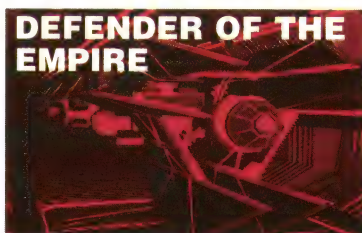
Empire: Compilation (76%)
Mixed bag of militaria: *Gunship 2000*, *Campaign* and *Historyline*. Let down by *Campaign*.

Cyberia

Interplay: Shoot-'em-up (71%)
Exquisitely rendered, but ultimately teeeeeealous, cyberpunk action-adventure.

Defender of the Empire

Virgin: Shoot-'em-up (80%)
Expansion disk for *TIE Fighter*. A few new ships and missions, but no new gameplay.



Iron Assault

Virgin: Shoot-'em-up (68%)
Ho-hum *Doom* clone (gasp) with a giant robot-esque atmosphere.

Ka-50 Hokum

Virgin: Flight sim (91%) PA
High-class helicopter havoc. Battle against modern-day pirates.

Legions

Mindscape: Strategy (61%)
Tedious Windows-based wargame set in Roman times.

Metal Marines

Mindscape: Strategy (81%)
Windows conversion of the simplistic Super NES wargame. Crawls along, even on a P60.

Premier Manager 3

Gremlin: Sports sim (89%)
Excellent football management simulation. Do we not like that?

Space Federation

Interplay: Strategy (55%)
Yawnsome celestial empire-building.

Superski Pro CD

Mindscape: Skiing sim (38%)
Horrid 'simulation' of various winter sports. It's rubbish!

Wings of Glory CD

EA/Origin: Flight sim (89%)
WW1 aerial antics as you take to the skies in various rickety cabbage crates.

Woodruff & the Schnibble of Azimuth

Sierra: Adventure (87%)
Stupid title, but a highly playable point 'n' click adventure.

X-Wing Collector's Edition CD

Virgin: Shoot-'em-up (92%) PA
Graphically enhanced compilation of *X-Wing*, *Imperial Pursuit* and *B-Wing*. Unmissable!



Battledrome

Sierra: Shoot-'em-up (52%)
Nasty, nasty giant robot gunfest.

The Big Red Adventure

Core Design: Adventure (79%)
Guide three weirdos through post-commie Russia in this occasionally funny point 'n' clicker.

Blackhawke

Interplay: Adventure (79%)
Console conversion in the *Flashback* mode.

Bureau 13

Gametek: Adventure (69%)
X File-flavoured point 'n' click game, spoiled by illogicality.

CyClones

Mindscape: Shoot-'em-up (82%)
Yet more *Doom*ular action, much like all the other clones.

Descent

Interplay: Shoot-'em-up (93%) PA
Doom taken into an extra dimension. Claustrophobic blaster that gives you full freedom of movement.

Discworld

Psygnosis: Adventure (88%)
Luxurious adaptation of Terry Pratchett's novels, with speech provided by Eric Idle, Jon Pertwee and Tony Robinson.

Guilty

Psygnosis: Adventure (73%)
Another point 'n' clickesque sci-fi let-down.

Hammer of the Gods

US Gold: Strategy (70%)
Nordic nastiness as you rape and pillage your way across Europe.

Jungle Strike

Gremlin: Shoot-'em-up (87%)
Thrilling Johnny Foreigner blasting, complete with ultra-hammy FMV intro.

Nick Faldo's Championship Golf

Grandslam: Golf sim (45%)
Feeble golf game that winds up stuck in a bunker.

Psycho Pinball

Codemasters: Sim (90%) PA
Pinball, obviously, and a pretty good attempt too.



SuperFrog

Team 17: Platform (60%)
Standard platform game. With a frog. Need I go on?

SuperKarts

Virgin: Racing sim (90%) PA
Top quality karting simulator that kept Steve in Alan Partridge quotes for weeks.

Tower Assault

Team 17: Shoot-'em-up (84%)
ET-bursting sequel to *Alien Breed*. They're coming out of the walls!



Air Havoc Controller

Domark: Simulation (60%)
Sleep-inducing air traffic control sim; the sole saving grace is a load of rendered air crashes.

Atari 2600 Action Pack

Activision: Nostalgia (52%)
Relive the days of the Atari VCS, then remember how duff it all was.

BC Racers

Core Design: Racing (82%)
Prehistoric *Mario Kart* clone; fun, but not as good as *SuperKarts*.

Bioforge CD

EA: Arcade adventure (92%) PA
Like *Cyberia*, only with a game attached. Excellent!

Dark Forces CD

Virgin: Shoot-'em-up (90%) PA
Doom with stormtroopers, no less. Good stuff.

Fighter Wing

Merit Studios: Flight sim (68%)
Fair-to-middling flight sim with a wide choice of planes.

Lost Eden CD

Virgin: Adventure (65%)
Looks great, but plays like a dinosaur log. Boring CD-streamed adventure.

Pinball Fantasies Deluxe CD

21st Century: Pinball (80%)
Heavy-duty flight sim... no, not really. It's pinball, and not bad at all.

Rise of the Triad

US Gold: Shoot-'em-up (89%)
Ultra-bloody *Doom*-style burstathon, complete with flying eyeballs and magic mushrooms.

Slipstream 5000 CD

Gremlin: Racing (85%)
A cross between *SuperKarts* and *Descent*. Great high-speed 3-D racing (annoying commentator, though).

Tank Commander CD

Domark: Simulation (83%)
Gleefully destructive 3-D tank game. Crush helpless farm animals under your tracks!

USS Ticonderoga CD

Mindscape: Strategy (57%)
Blow stuff up on the high seas in this not very interesting wargame.

Virtua Chess CD

Titus: Chess (94%) PA
Excellent chess program with several view options, including 3-D.



FLIGHT UNLIMITED



Alien Legacy CD

Sierra: Strategy (66%)
Update of the HD version. Still not very good.

The Daedalus Encounter CD

Virgin: Adventure (87%)
An interactive movie – no, don't pull that face. High production values and real actors make this one to look out for.

Flight of the Amazon Queen

Renegade: Adventure (84%)
Not-bad point 'n' clicker with an old B-movie atmosphere.

Flight Unlimited

Virgin: Flight sim (88%)
Very high quality simulation, but requires a Pentium to play properly.

Frontier: First Encounters

Gametek: Strategy/shoot-'em-up (84%)
Sequel to *Frontier*, much improved, but not radically different.

Front Lines

Impressions: Strategy (70%)
Futuristic wargame offering little to make it stand out.

Heretic

Raven: Shoot-'em-up (80%)
Doom meets *Dungeons & Dragons*. Not bad, but wands are just too poncy. We want big guns!

Hidden Worlds

Bullfrog: Shoot-'em-up (79%)
Data disk for *Magic Carpet*. The mixture as before, this time on snowy landscapes.

High Seas Trader

Impressions: Strategy (66%)
Non-adventure on the high seas. Sail around, trade stuff, fall asleep.

Live Action Football CD

Time Warner Interactive: Sports (46%)
Boring and pointless selection of FMV clips that claim to make up a game. They don't.

Mortal Kombat II

Acclaim: Beat-'em-up (83%)
Good version of the blood-soaked arcade hit, with decapitations and guttings galore!

NBA Live '95

EA: Sports sim (81%)
Statistics-heavy basketball game, featuring a Super VGA playing mode.

Pyrotechnica

Psygnosis: Shoot-'em-up (73%)
Variant on the *Descent* theme, but not as playable.

Renegade

Mindscape: Shoot-'em-up (84%)
Very attractive SVGA space combat game in a similar vein to *Wing Commander*.

Stardust Super Edition

Impressions: Shoot-'em-up (43%)
Yawn-inducing *Asteroids* update.

Super Street Fighter II: Turbo

Gametek: Beat-'em-up (91%) PA
Probably the best tooth-loosener on the PC. A near-perfect arcade conversion.

X-COM: Terror from the Deep

Microprose: Strategy (88%)
Aquatic sequel to *UFO*; very playable, but not that different from the original.



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113

PC POWER JULY 1995

The Butt Stops Here

E3 in Los Angeles is, to date, the largest computer trade show there's ever been, and the third largest ever hosted in America. It took place last month and I was there. Fortunately, I had visited previous CESs in Chicago and Las Vegas (a venue chosen because most of the industry are compulsive gamblers and not because it was practical) and so a massive Yank show, with their bigger and better everythings, was no real surprise. What did surprise me was the wealth of new PC games due this winter.

Every software developer seems to have at least five titles, and companies like Electronic Arts and Interplay will soon be receiving plenty of high marks in games magazines if their current clutch of titles is anything to go by. Instead of a single 'game of the show' nomination, I could happily reel off five. Check out my show report starting on page 18. Let the good times roll!

However there's one paradox at trade shows that I have never found the answer to. Why do software companies spend so much money on stands and freebies to impress the buyers, when a great proportion of them look at review scores in magazines for their purchasing decisions?

After the glitz and the glamour of the show has died down, the job of actually presenting the game to the magazines is often a badly organised and frankly embarrassing affair – often we don't even get a full copy of the game to review, and there is certainly none of the spirit of giving when it comes to press material such as instructions or players' guides that would allow us to appraise the game fully.

What many PC POWER readers don't realise is that the relationship between magazines and software companies is often a frayed and unreliable system which is tolerated and not exploited to the full. We are often made to feel as if it is our privilege to cover their games not the other way around.

What software companies should do is at last recognise the importance of our reviewing scores and treat us with the respect we deserve. A bad score can still kill a game y'know, whether it's Virgin or Team 17. Nobody should get too big for their boots...

Snapshot digital cameras are now widely available in Japan as huge photographic companies see this as the future. 35mm film is dated and will soon be phased out in the same way that CDs have replaced vinyl. Now you can take your holiday snaps, see what each picture is like in the viewfinder, decide whether or not to keep it, and then view them on your TV in perfect laserdisk quality. The one hour service at Boots will soon become a memory as pictures can now be developed instantly – and manipulated just as easily.

That's the point, you see; with digital cameras, photo evidence is redundant because it can be faked so perfectly. At least with prints you can often spot the joins or run chemical tests to determine the validity of the photo, but because digital pictures are created electronically, they can be altered without

trace. Bang goes trial evidence, news footage and even historical documents.

Imagine being convicted because your face is on a security camera at the bank when it was robbed, even though you weren't anywhere near. No-one will be able to tell what is real and what's bogus. And that's frightening. Thoughts please.

Finally, a word about PC POWER issue 18. For many people the *First Encounters* demo did not work because of precisely the same bug that was in the final version, and we apologise. Basically the solution is to ring Gametek on (01753) 553445 and ask for a patch disk immediately. We had no prior knowledge of the bug and the game has worked perfectly on all the machines we have tested it on. Gametek offer their unreserved apologies to all PC POWER readers and buyers of the game and also assure me that there is now a fully working version of the game on the streets; labelled as "New Remastered version." A spokesperson for Gametek also said that "We are one of the few publishers who are actively involved in eliminating bugs." Didn't work though, did it?

Despite the problems I did notice a great number of the *First Encounters* disks going missing from copies in WH Smiths and GAME. It's not big and it's not clever and it loses us sales because no-one wants to buy an issue with only one CD on it. If you see anyone craftily nicking a coverdisk feel free to give them a rather nasty Chinese burn.

Anyone wanting a disk if they've bought a copy without it should contact Karen on (01202) 200200. We only have a limited number so first come first serve.

Thanks for choosing PC POWER.

Damian Butt



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WINDOWS & DOS EMULATIONS



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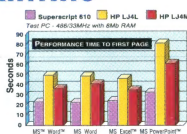
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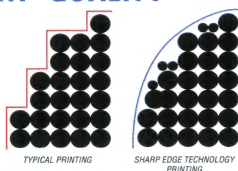
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~ WINDOWS & DOS COMPATIBILITY ~

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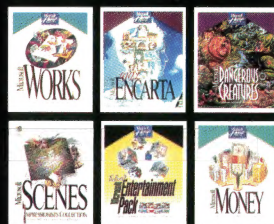
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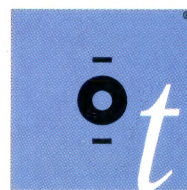


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